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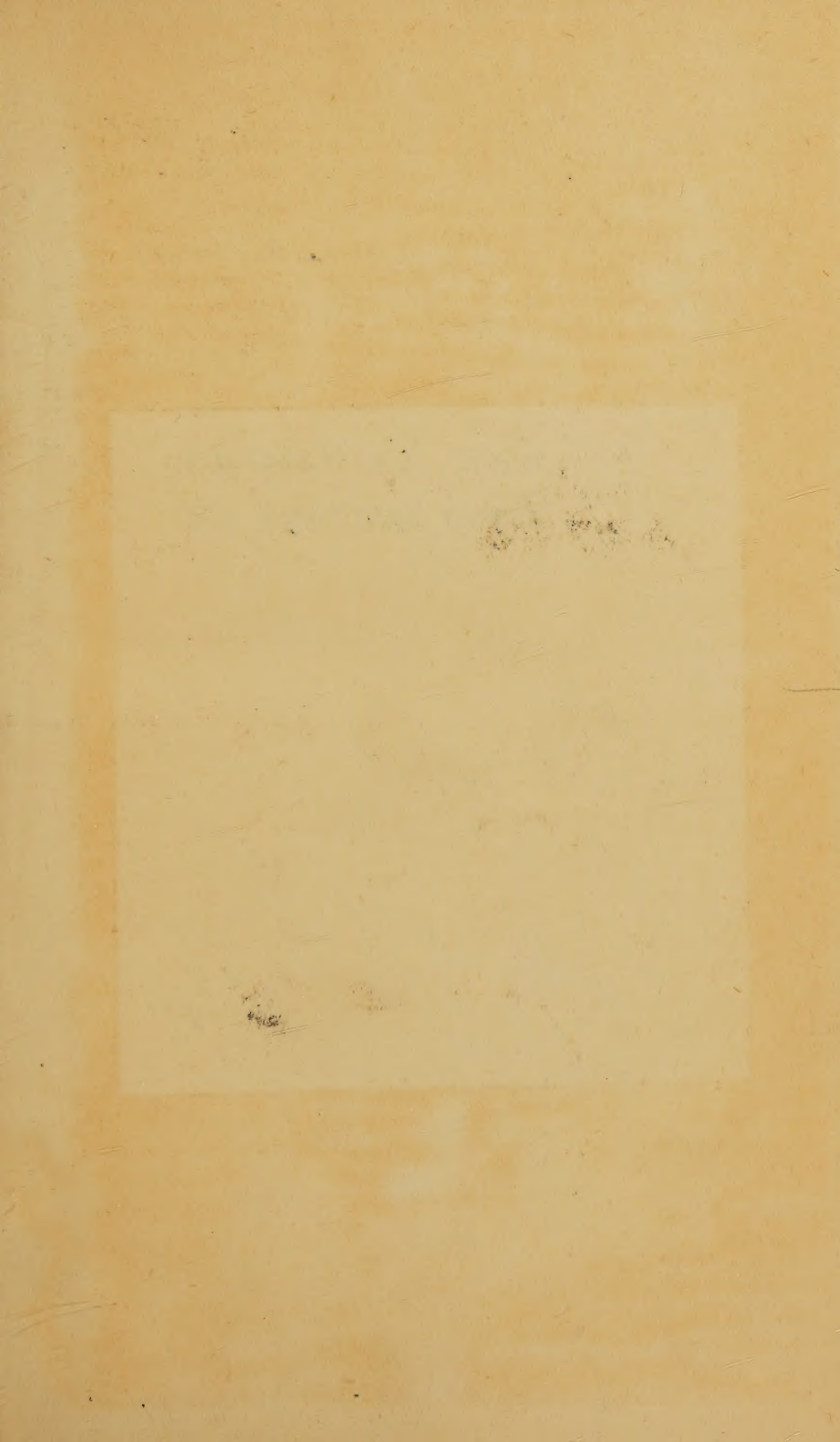
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HIS ESSENTIAL QUEST

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PRIMITIVE MAN

HIS ESSENTIAL QUEST

By
JOHN MURPHY
D.Litt.

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TO MY WIFE

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

I WISH to acknowledge the great kindness of Dr. Marett in writing the Foreword to this essay. I am also indebted to Principal A. G. Grieve, D.D., of Manchester, for a suggestion which led, at least indirectly, to its production ; to Prof. H. M. B. Reid, D.D., of Glasgow University, for much encouragement in the writing of it ; and to my brother, Rev. T. C. Murphy, B.D., of Broughty Ferry, for reading the proofs and for some thoughtful corrections.

J. M.

FOREWORD

By R. R. MARETT, M.A., D.Sc.

Reader in Social Anthropology, Oxford

MR. MURPHY has paid me a great compliment by asking me to contribute a foreword to his book; and this I am all the more glad to do because his line of treatment—that is to say, the approach to cultural anthropology by way of psychology—seems to me especially helpful at the present juncture.

If the so-called diffusionist school had its way, no room would be left for the psychologist within the four corners of the subject. But, surely, such a one-sided attitude is simply absurd. Suppose it were true, as they contend, that genuine origination is rare, and men live mostly by imitation. Even so, every act of borrowing has two aspects, of which one—and, in my opinion, far the more important—is essentially a matter for psychological consideration. For, whenever something is borrowed, not only must it be available, but it must likewise be in request. In other words, cultural transmission depends at least as much on choice as on circumstance. Let the diffusionist by all means prepare his distribution maps, on which a criss-cross of arrows indicates presumable currents of influence. But *why* cuts deeper than *how*. To understand not merely how but why these influences have left their mark here, while elsewhere they have had no effect, we must proceed to a psychological analysis of the motives that led to selection in the one case and rejection in the other.

To postulate, then, that the nature of culture is

sufficiently explained by its diffusion involves a mechanical interpretation of history, which is to say a surface-view of it. The last word about culture must always lie with the psychologist, because in its ultimate analysis culture is not an impression received from the environment by human nature, but rather the expression of human nature projected into surrounding things. Of culture in this sense the other animals have little or none. It is the differentia of the human species to have a capacity for it—one that within recorded times has rapidly, and on the whole steadily, developed. Thus to understand psychologically, that is, from the inside, man's capacity for culture is to hold the key to the inwardness of history from its earliest chapter to its latest. As I read Mr. Murphy's essay, he is insisting all the time on just this cardinal point. We acquire culture, on his showing, because our minds have a craving for wholeness. We have an instinct or presentiment that we can get the best out of life only by pulling things together in the world so as thereby to pull ourselves together. Man, in a word, is a universe-builder by right of his spiritual constitution. This fact it is that makes his history interesting. Even his numerous mistakes and backslidings become tinged with the pathos of tragedy when, with the aid of psychology, one takes account of the high seriousness of his abiding vital purpose.

To revert to the diffusionist school, it is perhaps only fair to note that they go too far in one direction because they judge their predecessors to have gone too far in the other. In the history of every science there is this swing of the pendulum ; but that is no reason

why one should not try to be balanced in one's judgments. When evolutionary principles were first applied to man, the pioneers of anthropology were doubtless too precipitate in their attempts to envisage the assumed forward process in its entirety. They pictured it as a general advance on the part of humanity so uniform in its settled intention that any sagging in the line might be put down to local obstacles, rather than to arbitrary and erratic movements on the part of the units in action. Thereupon it became the task of the next generation of students to rectify this over-simplified view of human development, by concentrating on the details. The time had come to lay stress on the diversity of man's experiments in shaping his life. Of late, anthropologists have become chary of investigation on a world-wide scale. Ethnology tends to make common cause with ethnography. What may be called the method of the representative individual has come into favour, according to which a particular section of mankind is intensively studied, yet in such a way as to illustrate tendencies that are more or less typical of mankind in general. Indeed, the state of the evidence warrants no other procedure. More is to be learnt about primitive culture by treating as crucial the comparatively few instances that, thanks to first-rate work in the field, lend themselves to thorough examination than by skimming through travellers' tales by the thousand, as if the significance of one's examples were a matter of quantity instead of quality. Concurrently, then, with this prevailing habit of piecemeal as opposed to whole-sale research, there has arisen the notion of culture as a sort of centrifugal force. Fixing his eye in the first

instance on one part of the line where mighty deeds are being accomplished, the student then looks to right and left to estimate the extent to which the rest have been thereby encouraged to do likewise. Now it is hard to write the history of a gallant division without claiming that it won the war. So too, then, the besetting fallacy of the diffusionist is to derive all culture worthy of the name from the one centre which he happens to have singled out for study. Thus one who wears the green spectacles of Egyptology is apt to see the whole world green.

Diversity, then, having been emphasized to the point of extravagance, the turn of unity has come again. After all, for all our differences—so important as they seem to the inhabitants of rival parishes—we are remarkably alike as human beings. To the psychologist the history of culture seems like an endless variation of the same tune, with increase of harmony as its intrinsic motive and reward. I need not labour the point, because Mr. Murphy, as I understand him, is throughout insisting on this very truth. All I claim for him—and all, I am sure, that he would claim on his own behalf—is that anthropologists should not lose sight of the psychic unity or uniformity that alone entitles them to regard mankind as something more than a mildew on the face of the planet—part of an intermittent biosphere, as the anthropo-geographers say without meaning to be comic. Were it not for this psychic unity, there would be no sense in speaking of human culture at all. Culture is something common to mankind, something in which all of us can have a share. This power of sharing in it, then, is a funda-

mental postulate, without which cultural anthropology would be as a handful of dust. It may indeed be that, as knowledge accumulates, it will become less and less feasible for a conspectus of primitive culture in its full detail to be achieved by the single scholar. Thus the history of civilization is to-day chiefly entrusted to special students, each responsible for no more than a section ; and the province of universal history is abandoned to the philosopher. Granting all this, however, we cannot afford to forget that history exists for man, not man for history. That innate sense of a direction common to the race, about which Mr. Murphy writes, will remind each genuine historian that his business is to show the bearing of the culture that he studies in particular on the development of human culture in general. From time to time, therefore, it will be appropriate, nay, necessary, that the psychologist should intervene in a discussion apt to lose itself in details. It would be fatal if the orientation of historical science were overlooked, akin as this is to that spiritual orientation, of which, as Mr. Murphy shows, it is man's birth-right to be aware.

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I

THE MEANING OF PRIMITIVE

THE value of such a study as this depends at the outset upon the definition of 'primitive'. Strictly speaking, primitive means near to the beginnings or origins of the things so designated. The primitive in man, therefore, should be that which characterizes him near to his origin as man, that is, when he began to be human. Remote as that may seem to be from us, there are not wanting materials for knowing something about it. The reconstruction of the skull and thence also of the brain of fossil man from remains preserved from the ages when, along with human traits, his bodily structure was full of vestiges of his kinship to the anthropoid apes, throws unexpected light upon how he must have thought, and upon the difference in that regard between him and civilized or cultivated man. But we give the term a fuller extension, though with the necessary caution. We include under 'primitive' the mind of the savage of the present day who is at a low stage of culture, and in religion as in other respects is at the levels probably occupied by early man. When this is done, the range of the investigation is manifestly greatly increased.

'With some exceptions,' says Prof. Hopkins of Yale, 'the simpler form is the more primitive form of thought, whether in art or religion.'¹ And in pursuing man's thoughts on religion to their simpler and more primitive forms, the student of religion is merely following the method of other sciences. The hyper-sensitive freshman in anatomy may view with disgust

¹ *The History of Religions*, E. Washburn Hopkins, (Macmillan, 1918), p. 14.

the snail or worm he is required to dissect, until he discovers that its digestive system is a sort of diagram or ground-plan of the human, and enables him to see how the more complex system has been built up. The zoologist finds in the nervous arrangements of the mollusc or the sea-anemone analogues to those simplest nervous reflexes of the human body which are the antecedents and rudimentary forms of thinking. So the investigator of religion sees a great and keenly discriminating light cast upon its highest forms from its simpler and ruder expressions in primitive and savage life.

There is no modern science which does not thus assume the Law of Evolution as the backbone of its study; and the sciences of religion are no exception. The richest illumination of the growing thing is to see it grow, especially when keeping the highest stages, the perfection of the thing, always in view. The end interprets the beginnings, as Aristotle taught us to say, rather than the beginnings the end. The seed by itself has little meaning until the flower it is to become sheds its radiance backward upon it. Each of the great evolutionary Sciences has some rich and complex form or forms always in its mind as it investigates what is rudimentary and primitive. The zoologist never quite forgets that the splendid organism of man is 'the roof and crown of things'. The astronomer as he studies the nebulae has at the back of his mind that daedal earth on which he stands at his telescope. And the student of religion is but following the same legitimate track when he views all the previous stages in the evolution of religion and morals in the light of the highest forms of these known to him, their richest unifications, such as an ideal humanity or an ideal of human society. With these final expressions—which in a sense are also final causes—of man's progress in view, the rudimentary forms of his belief and conduct

are invested with meaning, and the direction of his tendencies becomes significant. On the other hand, these primitive elements and tendencies throw light from their simple, diagrammatic forms upon the highest embodiments of ethics and religion ; and the value, which science keenly maintains in all its spheres, of seeing a process of evolution along the whole line of its development, stage melting into stage, may justly be claimed for the study of the psychology of primitive religion.

Prof. Elliot Smith makes a strong protest against what he regards as the common misuse by modern ethnologists of the word 'primitive'. He says that 'it has become a practice to refer to all the customs and traditions of such peoples as the aboriginal Australians and the Bushmen of South Africa as "primitive", although it is patent that many of these elements of culture, and especially those which are most often used as illustrations of "primitive" beliefs and practices, and labelled as such, have been borrowed in relatively recent times from more advanced and alien civilizations'.¹ In these words there is adumbrated a theory which, if substantiated, would considerably reduce the value of any psychological analysis which might be attempted of primitive mind.

The difference between this theory and what would be called by those who profess it the orthodox ethnology, is revealed in the contrasted interpretations they give of a large fact with which all anthropologists are familiar. This fact is the striking similarity of human institutions in all ages of man's development and in widely separated areas of the world. Identical or similar ideas, myths, customs, magical and religious rites, forms of art, inventions or discoveries, and invented articles, are found among tribes the most remote from each other. There are, for instance, no

¹ *The Evolution of Man* (Oxford), 1924, pp. 49-50.

known peoples who are ignorant of fire, just as no race has yet been discovered which is wholly without religion at least in some rudimentary form. Among invented things a salient example is the universality of wrought flints of Neolithic or Palaeolithic type which are found in all quarters of the globe, and align the Australian native of to-day with the Mousterian man of perhaps a hundred thousand years ago. 'The bull-roarer', that simple piece of sharpened stick, 'is found, always as a sacred instrument, employed in religious mysteries, in New Mexico, in Australia, in New Zealand, in ancient Greece and in Africa; while it is a peasant boy's plaything in England.'¹ The Spaniards, invading Mexico, found a sacramental service among the Aztecs astoundingly like the Christian Eucharist.² The conquerors, indeed, regarded the native ceremonies as malignant caricatures invented by the devil in mockery of the true sacred rites of the Catholic Church. Baptismal washing or sprinkling of a child in connexion with the giving of a name existed among the Cherokees, the Peruvians, the Negroes of the Guinea coast, and many other tribes in different parts of the world.

The two main explanations of these similarities in religious institutions and practices, which, until a few years ago, had occurred to anthropologists, are stated by Dr. L. R. Farnell as, on the one hand, 'belief in an ultimately identical tradition', and, on the other, 'perhaps more reasonably, the psychologic theory that the human brain cell in different races at the same stage of development responds with the same religious speech or the same religious act to the same stimuli supplied by the environment'.³ The former of the two explanations refers to the familiar theory of

¹ *Custom and Myth*, A. Lang (Longmans), p. 31.

² *Primitive Ritual and Belief*, E. O. James, p. 133.

³ *The Evolution of Religion*, p. 9.

dogmatic orthodoxy, that there was an original revelation of God to man, and consequently an original monotheism from which the countless superstitions and varieties of religion grew by a process of degeneration. So considerable an authority as Prof. Jevons adhered to this theory in his earlier works; and he endeavoured to identify, without success, the tribal god of totemism with such a monotheistic belief; but he has since abandoned the theory. The idea is so clearly the outcome of a credal position and indeed of dogmatic bias that we shall not stay to discuss it.

More important is the theory to which the brilliant W. H. R. Rivers apparently inclined in the last year or two before his death, to which G. Elliot Smith has attached his distinguished name, and which W. J. Perry devotes himself with much ingenuity to endeavouring to substantiate. Dr. Rivers pointed out with truth that the reaction against the orthodox theory went too far in its neglect of the influence of degeneration on the history of human society.¹ The many cases in which degeneration had actually taken place thus came to be ignored. Where, for example, the means of navigation were rude, it was not realized that a higher art might have been lost through a decline in culture. Hence very early migrations across wide seas were ruled out as impossible. But, once degeneration was restored as a factor in the argument, and migrations were seen to be feasible without the hypothesis of land connexions, the possibility of transmission of one culture over a wide area of the globe was recovered. From his study of the Melanesians and Polynesians Dr. Rivers was much impressed by the evidence for migrations over large areas of the South Seas, and for the transmission of the culture of a higher people to a lower, though this was often masked by the incapacity of the lower race to retain the transmitted belief or practice or to do

¹ *Medicine, Magic, and Religion*, pp. 58-9.

more than retain it in a mutilated form. The importance of this transmission hypothesis lies in its accounting for similarities in ideas and rites among far-separated peoples by contact of one race with another. Thus what might seem to be 'primitive' and original in one people—a myth, a religious rite, a magical practice—may prove to have been derived from some superior and perhaps forgotten race.

A full statement and criticism of this theory here are not possible. We simply sketch it as a background to the psychological theory which we hold, and which must be adjusted to the truth in it. It is carried out with great thoroughness by Prof. Elliot Smith. The essence of his view is that all man's beliefs were created at a particular period, and probably by one race, the Pre-dynastic Egyptians. The myths and beliefs connected with agriculture and irrigation in Egypt 'came to include within their scope all the innermost beliefs of mankind at the time when the foundations of the thoughts and hopes of civilized man for all time were being established'.¹ The effects of this first system of thought 'are seen not only in the ritual practices of every religion but also in the direction of the innermost thoughts of all people and their expression in every language'.² These beliefs were carried into all quarters of the world by the diffusion and migrations of a people called by Mr. W. J. Perry the Children of the Sun, who mummified their dead, made megalithic tombs and monuments, and worshipped the sun. Thus the religious ideas and customs, and the magical practices of savage man everywhere, have not originated in the country in which they are now found or in the crude reflections of the people who hold them, but have filtered through to them from direct or indirect contact with that wonderful originating race.

¹ *The Evolution of Man*, G. Elliot Smith, p. 128.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 130.

We may mark our complete divergence from this theory by reference to the following statements of Prof. Elliot Smith. With regard to 'the constituent elements of civilization', he declares that 'there is no natural impulse in Man to invent such customs', nor has he the 'ability to do so independently in one generation'. The possession of the arts of civilization by any one people he takes to be 'positive evidence of contact', direct or indirect, with 'the people who actually invented their particular arts'.¹ It would seem, then, that there is such a thing as invention or origination. But there appears to be no good reason for supposing that the mind of man was only inventive and original among the Pre-dynastic Egyptians. Yet this is distinctly the impression conveyed by Mr. Perry in his book, *The Origin of Magic and Religion*, where, indeed, the arguments are in our opinion often highly conjectural and ill-supported. In exact opposition to Prof. Elliot Smith we should maintain that there is in man just such a natural impulse as he denies. It is an impulse which it is one of the main purposes of this essay to investigate, a tendency which is in the nature of mind and is operative in all races. The impulse is toward unification: it is the tendency to unify both his thought and his practical life, which we shall later consider more fully under the title of man's Quest for Unity. In this endeavour, the imperfection of his instrument, the mind, its slow growth itself in unity and in all its powers, and its uncertain grasp upon phenomena, account alike for the crudeness and immense variety of his primitive beliefs, on the one hand, and for his long periods of stagnation at low levels of culture, on the other; while the developing power of unification or mental integration is the means by which man attains the loftiest achievements of his philosophy and art, his ethics and religion.

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 122.

The dust of the controversy between the Transmission and the Psychological Theories of primitive mind is still in the air ; and time must be allowed for the newer hypothesis to be tested by reference to the facts it sets out to explain. In adhering to the other, we acknowledge the value of the transmission theory in directing attention to the great part played by the migration and contact of peoples, and the consequent diffusion of one culture over a wide area, and also to the important role of degeneration of races, so that the higher culture becomes a half-forgotten tale, a myth, a dim memory of a Golden Age. These must be given their place in the causation of similarities of belief and custom in lands far distant from each other. We should also accept Prof. Elliot Smith's criticism of the idea involved in the phrase 'psychic unity' employed by some of the older school of ethnologists to account for these similarities.¹ It involves an unnecessary dogmatic postulate.

On the other hand, we dissent from the idea of Dr. Rivers that the Psychological Theory takes the view that 'the human mind is the same everywhere'.² On the contrary, the human mind is different at different stages of its development, just as the human brain is : and both are different in various races. And these differences account for much in the variety of human belief and custom. But we shall maintain throughout that the resemblances in man's ideas and practices are chiefly traceable to the similarity in structure of the human brain everywhere, and in the consequent nature of his mind. As the physical organ is, at all known stages of man's history, substantially the same in constitution and nervous processes, so the mind has certain universal characteristics, powers, and methods of action. The lowest savage has the tendency, how-

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 112 f.

² *Medicine, Magic, and Religion*, p. 77.

ever ineffectual it often is, to work up his percepts into concepts, to form general ideas from observed facts ; and he succeeds even in arriving at what are for him general laws, vague and faulty as they are to us. Given data, he makes inferences and leaps at conclusions : often the inference is an unexpected one, and he takes a long and erratic leap which lands him in odd places and queer notions ; but he is learning to walk mentally, feebly essaying the road to science and philosophy. This similarity in the operation of the brain is seen in the nineteenth-century intellects of Darwin and Russell Wallace, which, working on the same data, arrived simultaneously at the Theory of Evolution ; and it accounts for numerous claims in the same age to priority with respect to the same invention or discovery. The similar operations of the common mind of the race—more fragmentary in their data, more rudimentary in their powers, and vaguer in their results—explain the appearance of such beliefs and institutions as Totemism, Exogamy, and the many purificatory rituals, in most widely separated peoples and portions of the globe.

In particular, the data for the thoughts and inferences of primitive man are very limited and are much the same everywhere. The nearer we come to the earliest type of man, the more the means to his ends tend to coincide over the whole race, as is shown by flint tools and weapons scattered all over the world and in many strata of time. Hence the similarity in the means he takes in various peoples and ages to express his early religious and social ideas, and to attain his crude moral and spiritual ends. As Mr. Stanley A. Cook well says :

‘ If we look back upon the history of thought, it is obvious that there was once a time when the amount of divergence must have been exceedingly small. The factors that made for variation of ideas were wanting, and, as we repeatedly see in primitive

or rudimentary societies, a certain oneness of all thought is characteristic of the lower levels. Starting as we must with groups, and not with isolated individuals, we must conceive a stage of development when the contents of mind were quantitatively very small and closely related.' ¹

Our conclusion is, then, that there is a primitive type of brain, such as that of palaeolithic Neanderthal man or that of the existing Australian aborigine, and that there is a primitive type of mind, such as those are in which imagination is active, the brain-centres for it being well developed, while, owing to lack of pre-frontal development of the cortex, there is a deficiency in reason, co-ordination, and control. Those beliefs and customs of savage man are 'primitive' which are the product of that primitive type of mind, or of non-primitive mind which from some cause or other keeps the co-ordinative, reasoning, controlling power in abeyance. That man is 'primitive', whether he is a Vedda of Ceylon or a European peasant, whose ideas and practices are of that character.

¹ *The Study of Religions*, p. 84.

II

MATERIALS FOR A PSYCHOLOGY OF PRIMITIVE MAN

- I. **T**HE first source of data for a psychology of the primitive mind is Palaeontology. The fossil remains of early man and the relics of his life and work, discovered and investigated by that science, are remarkably fruitful in knowledge of him considering the fragmentary nature of the material. The reason is that we can bring to bear upon each small relic of his anatomy or his work our general knowledge of the bodily and mental structure of man, both savage and civilized, as he is, and thus form a fair idea of what he was like and even of what he thought. But, besides this, the remains of primitive man in fossil and other forms are themselves so numerous and so well authenticated that there may be said to be a sufficiently continuous anatomical chain of intermediate forms between modern man and a generalized ancestor both of him and of the existing anthropoid apes. The Neanderthal type of man, for example, so called from Neanderthal near Düsseldorf where one of the earliest specimens was found, is represented by many remains, portions of and even complete skeletons. It is not necessary, however, for our purpose in this study, to trace the anatomical history of man from the beginning down to modern times. There are numerous works in which this is done. The data we are seeking may best be found by glancing at a number of the types of early man at various stages of his development, and observing the relation between them and the type of mind by which they may have been accompanied, the psycho-

logical characters, in fact, which can with some accuracy be deduced from the anatomical structure of these types, and particularly from the form of the skull and the nature of the brain as inferred from it.

(a) In turning first to *Homo neanderthalensis*, it is to be noted that this race is now generally regarded by anthropologists as not an ancestor of modern man but as a distinct species which became extinct. None the less, what can be gathered concerning his mind is of much interest. Prof. Elliot Smith gives a vivid picture of him which displays many of the sub-human characters which must also have belonged to man's true ancestors.

‘His short, thick-set, and coarsely built body was carried in a half-stooping slouch upon short, powerful, and half-flexed legs of peculiarly ungraceful form. His thick neck sloped forward from the broad shoulders to support the massive flattened head, which protruded forward, so as to form an unbroken curve of neck and back, in place of the alternation of curves which is one of the graces of the truly erect *Homo sapiens*. The heavy overhanging eye-brow ridges and retreating forehead, the great coarse face with its large eye-sockets, broad nose, and receding chin, combined to complete the picture of unattractiveness, which it is more probable than not was still further emphasised by a shaggy covering of hair over most of the body. The arms were relatively short, and the exceptionally large hands lacked the delicacy and the nicely-balanced co-operation of thumb and fingers which is regarded as one of the most distinctive of human characteristics.’¹

To this strange being, so ape-like in many respects, we cannot deny the name of human ; for he knew the use of fire, made rude flint weapons, hunted the mammoth and the woolly rhinoceros in Europe during more than one Ice age, and, it is probable, buried his dead with some faith in a future life.

There is special significance in the character of the brain of Neanderthal man. His skull and presumably

¹ *The Evolution of Man*, pp. 69-70.

his brain were actually larger than those of modern Europeans. But Prof. Elliot Smith points out that

‘ the development of the brain of Neanderthal Man was partial and unequal. That part of the organ which plays the outstanding part in determining mental superiority was not only relatively, but actually, much smaller than it is in *Homo sapiens*. The large size of the Neanderthal brain was due to a great development of that region which was concerned primarily with the mere recording of the fruits of experience, rather than with the acquisition of great skill in the use of the hand and the attainment of the sort of knowledge that comes with manual experiment.’¹

The importance of this characteristic of Neanderthal man lies in the fact that the low development of the frontal region of the cranium is necessarily accompanied by a low development of the prefrontal region of the brain. It is striking to discover that this deficiency in the frontal part of the cortex is shared with Neanderthal man by the modern infant and by such a primitive existing type as the Australian native. The cerebral area referred to is that in which the power of co-ordination or of unification resides. In its lowest development this co-ordination is at first simply of muscular movement, particularly of the hands and eyes ; but with the increase in size and refinement of this prefrontal region of the *neo-pallium* the power of co-ordination also grows until the mind is capable of making complex wholes of its experience, and of integrating its thought into the higher unifications of religion, science, and philosophy. On the other hand, it is part of our task to show in later pages how the absence or defect of this capacity of co-ordinative thought accounts for the forms taken by the beliefs and customs of primitive and savage man.

(b) At an immense distance in earlier time from the appearance of Neanderthal man on the earth, there

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 70.

existed a creature of a nature and characteristics so ambiguous that there was for a time after its discovery a vigorous controversy as to whether it was ape or man. *Pithecanthropus erectus*, reconstructed from the vault of a skull, a femur, two molars, and one pre-molar tooth, unearthed by Dr. Dubois in Java in 1894, is now, however, generally accepted as belonging to the human family, and as the most primitive known member of it. It is at least as early as the Lower Pleistocene. There are two characters observable in this most ancient fragment of a skeleton, which are interesting to us as pointing forward to the line of human progress and hinting at the development of early man's psychology.

The first point is that the skull of *Pithecanthropus* indicates that the speech-centres in the brain were highly developed, the corresponding lobe being twice the size of that of the ape, though still only half that of the normal human being. Prof. Elliot Smith, who is of unsurpassed authority on such a point, declares that the endocranial cast of this skull 'reveals a localized and precocious expansion of those areas of the brain which we associate with the power of articulate speech'.¹ This introduces the important question as to the relation between man's brain and his human characters on the one hand, and, on the other, the modifications of his bodily structure in the process of its evolution. Here, for instance, we have highly developed speech-centres combined with the erect position of the body. The necessary connexion is evident enough; for the hanging position of the head in quadrupeds makes the *free* passage of sounds impossible, and prevents the evolution of such vocal organs as are compatible with articulate speech.

The second point which emerges, a similar and related one to the first, from this glimpse of the Java man, is raised by the fact that the femur of this

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 84.

skeleton is of a less ape-like and more human character than the skull. It is pointed out by Prof. Scott-Elliot that this is 'a curious confirmation of what ought to happen on theoretical grounds. Man theoretically ought to have begun to walk uprightly before his brain developed to the average scale required in mankind.'¹ This statement is substantially true, though it must be supplemented by the point that there is an erect position of the body apart from *walking* upright which was attained by certain primitive arboreal forms, such as the ancient Tree-Shrews of the type of the existing Spectral Tarsier, which were probably the ancestors of the Simiidae and thus of man. In any case, the relation of the erect posture of the body to the brain remains the same. The forward hanging position of the head in quadrupeds, and to a less degree in arboreal apes, necessitates strong neck-muscles and massive bony attachments on the skull. The erect position, with the skull resting as on the top of a column, dispenses with these muscles and their attachments, and gives room and opportunity for backward enlargement of the brain. It is clear also that in the hanging position only a limited weight of brain is tolerable, while in the resting position there is much greater scope. Again, the massive projecting jaw in ape-like forms demands powerful muscles, especially with the added weight of heavy teeth; and these muscles require strong bony ridges about the temples and eye-orbits for their attachment. As the jaw recedes and the teeth decline in size and weight—perhaps as a result of the invention of fire and the eating of cooked food—the muscles grow less massive, the bony ridges cease to be necessary, and a larger frontal development and a higher, broader forehead become possible.

(c) The remark just made points to the fact that at

¹ *Primitive Man and his Story*, p. 44.

a certain stage in his evolution man's fitness to survive in the struggle for existence concentrated in his brain. We may connect this fact with a third early human type which occurs on the evolutionary ladder somewhere between *Pithecanthropus* and Neanderthal man. It is the fossil type known as *Eoanthropus*, or, from the place of its discovery in Sussex, Piltdown man. There has been a famous dispute concerning these fragments, the crucial point of which was the question whether the extremely ape-like lower jaw found near them belonged to this undoubtedly human individual. In accepting Prof. Elliot Smith's view that the whole of the remains constitute a very early human type, we agree also with the inference which he draws from it.

'The outstanding interest of the Piltdown skull is the confirmation it affords of the view that in the evolution of Man the brain led the way.' 'The brain attained what may be termed the human rank at a time when the jaws and face, and no doubt the body also, still retained much of the uncouthness of Man's simian ancestors. In other words, Man at first, so far as his general appearance and "build" are concerned, was merely an ape with an overgrown brain.'¹

Up to a certain point, then, the bodily organization of the being who ultimately became Man was the main subject for development. He acquired, for instance, the kind of jaw and teeth necessary for the kind of food, nuts, fruit, and the like, he lived upon. But he was neither strong nor swift enough to escape the great carnivora among which he lived—had it not been for the trees. He survived because, like his fellow-primates, he was not 'probably arboreal', as Robert Louis Stevenson called his far-back but still influential ancestor, but actually so. When, therefore, he left the trees and walked on the ground, his chance of survival would have fallen to zero. But here, so to say, the brain stepped in. Mental power took charge of the

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 67-8.

business of life. The erect position into which he was perhaps forced by the thinning of the trees and the vanishing of the forest gave room for the growth of the brain. Man's organs of speech in their new position became capable of a new variety of sounds, and he acquired his unique possession of language. Words became the instruments not merely of speech but of thought ; and reflection as well as language began to be articulate. The great advantage of speech would be in its making co-operation, social action, possible. A mere bleat or growl might call another to his assistance ; but to be able to speak is to have the power to communicate a plan and to unite in common action. 'The differentia of man,' says Dr. Marett, 'the quality that marks him off from the other animals, is undoubtedly the power of articulate speech. Thereby his mind itself becomes articulate. If language is ultimately a creation of the intellect, yet hardly less fundamentally is the intellect a creation of language.'¹

(d) A very important element in the development of man's brain, and consequently of his psychology, is curiously connected with an interesting phase in his far-distant animal ancestry. The striking part discovered by Prof. Elliot Smith, Mr. Wood Jones, and others, to have been played by a family of ancient small insectivores, the Tree-Shrews, in the origin of man and the history of his brain, is one of the recent romances of science in this field. We can only touch briefly upon the two salient points in this story.

The first point is the substitution of reliance upon the sense of sight, upon vision, in one of these Shrew-like creatures, for reliance upon smell and the olfactory functions. This occurred when it became arboreal. The result, as shown in *Tarsius*, or the Spectral Tarsier, that curious living representative of extinct types, is a 'noteworthy reduction in the size of the

¹ *Anthropology*, R. R. Marett (Williams & Norgate), p. 130.

olfactory parts of the brain', and 'an enormous development of the visual cortex in the neo-pallium'.¹ The evolution which brought the eyes literally to the front in *Tarsius* was a step in the direction of the conjugation of the eyes so as to co-ordinate two images into one, the function of stereoscopic vision.² This is not yet in the power of the little Tree-Shrew, but it is on the way towards it. Out of this simple tendency to stereoscopic vision, that is, to co-ordinate the two separate images of the eyes into one distinct whole, and the unifying, concentrating effort of attention involved in it, there have grown, probably, the general visualizing and imaginative operations of thought. Here is the germ of that co-ordinative power of the imagination which will play some part in later discussions. We remark at the moment that imagination appears to reside in the visual (and auditory) area of the brain: its co-ordinations are generally in visual form, images seen in the mind; and in the order of brain and mind development, both imagination and its organ are well developed when the prefrontal area of the cortex, and its function, are still comparatively rudimentary. The importance of these facts may appear in later chapters.

The second point to which we referred concerns the evolution of the pre-frontal region of the brain just mentioned. It is in connexion with the development of muscular control and co-ordination, in this early ancestor of the apes and man, the climbing Tree-Shrew, especially in the use and guidance of the hands in conjunction with its development of 'eyemindedness', as Prof. J. Arthur Thomson calls it, that according to Prof. Elliot Smith this area and function began their remarkable course.

'The high specialization of the sense of sight awakened the curiosity to examine the objects around it with closer minute-

¹ Elliot Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

² *Op. cit.*, pp. 141-2.

ness and supplied guidance to the hands in executing more precise and more skilled movements than any that the Tree-Shrew attempts.'

In this way there arose a special organ of attention and co-ordination, which

'was evolved from the motor area itself, in the form of an outgrowth placed immediately in front of it, a formation that attains much larger dimensions and a greater specialization of structure in the primates than in any other Order. It is the germ of the great prefrontal area of the human brain, which is said to be "concerned with attention and the general orderly co-ordination of psychic processes".'¹

It is indeed in this part of the brain that the supreme power of reason in civilized man, the power of co-ordination and of discrimination, is resident. Deficiency in this prefrontal development, with the accompanying sloping forehead, is a marked point of difference in primitive man from modern cultured man; and the absence of the power to make orderly, coherent unifications of experience from the mentality of primitive types of men accounts for many things in their beliefs and practices which later we are to investigate.

(e) It is the possession of this area of the brain comparatively well developed, with the consequent higher forehead, which distinguishes the men of the Upper Palaeolithic age from earlier types such as Piltdown and Neanderthal man. These people of the caves, mainly of France and Spain, with their truly remarkable art, their great variety of weapons, and their burial customs indicating some idea of a future existence for their dead, are true members of the species *Homo sapiens*. Still, they are of primitive type in some respects; and the fact that their often realistic and accurate work in carving and painting animals on the walls of caverns had apparently a magical purpose, and

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 32-3.

was probably the occupation of an artist-magician caste, marks the distance between their mind and the modern mentality.

Enough has perhaps been said upon these types to show the considerable amount of material which Palaeontology supplies for the study of the nature and processes of the mind of early man. Even so general a survey provides an impression of the mighty struggle upwards of these primitive ancestors of ours and their kin, which moves us to a certain sympathy and reverence towards them for the heritage they have conquered for us and for the dim, unrecorded heroisms by which it was won.¹

2. The sources in modern life of material for a psychology of primitive man are largely those which are the subject of Psychology in general. We shall touch lightly some of these in order to dispose of a few preliminary questions.

(a) From what has been already said of man's animal ancestry and the influence of that far-distant heredity upon him, it may be clear that we recognize no unbridgeable gap between the animal and man in evolution or between instinct and intelligence. The latter distinction will occupy us considerably in subsequent chapters. With regard to the other question it seems to us unnecessary to postulate a special creation to account for man, since the creation takes place much more interestingly and beautifully by the growth which goes on all the time, like the 'arraying' or creation of the lilies of the field, by growth, as suggested in the Sermon on the Mount. The late Prof. Sanday bravely accepted this position in one of the latest of his lectures when he wrote :

'It requires an effort to realize, truism as it is, that to write a history of Religion, we have to begin with a *tabula rasa*. We have to go back to the cave-men. When man first appeared

¹ Cf. Sir James Frazer, *Taboo and Perils of the Soul*, p. 421.

upon the earth, everything existed *in posse* but absolutely nothing *in esse*. The creature newly stranded upon the earth's surface, from the first moment that he acquired substantive existence, was left—or seemed to be left—to his own resources. Whatever divine help might be awaiting him, was as yet invisible and potential.' 'Religion begins with a blank. But everything begins with a blank. It seems almost too much to say that Man began as a conscious being. He began as a sentient being, with the potentiality of consciousness.'¹

We shall look, therefore, to the *psychology of animals* to illustrate that of man, because the mental life of man flows in a current continuous with the instincts and rudimentary ideas of his animal ancestry, and thus what we can trace of mind in the animal realm leads us nearer to the springs and simpler streams of that human mentality.

(b) A further source of light upon the primitive mind is found in *the mind of the savage* of to-day. We have already maintained that in some respects, and in certain races and regions especially, the savage is the primitive. The aboriginal Australian, for example, is physically an early type of man. His skull and brain are of an early type. Therefore, making all allowance for possible impacts of other and perhaps superior races upon him far back in his history—whence, it may be, his myths of the Altcheringa, his Golden Age in the past—it is safe to treat his thinking as of a primitive character. We devote a part of this work to a criticism of the mistaken theory of a French school of sociologists who hold that the thought of primitive man—and this includes the savage of the present day—is fundamentally different from the thought of civilized man.

(c) In consequence of this fundamental difference, the French school to which we refer, led by MM. Emil Durkheim and Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, declare that there is nothing infantile or analogous to *the mind of the child* in the thinking of the 'primitive'; and so they reject

¹ *Divine Overruling* (Oxford), pp. 32-3.

all light from that small human lamp. But, on the contrary, the child, not only before birth but after it, is the embryonic human being; and there are striking primitive traits in the child mind. In the infant as in the race the prefrontal area of the brain is the last to be developed. The deficiency in the coordinative, and (which is but the obverse side of the same thing) the discriminative power of the mind, which is chiefly located in that prefrontal region, may be seen, for example, in the ease with which a child can be led to treat a dead thing, such as a table or chair which has hurt him, as living and culpable. The same lack of clear distinctions in his concepts, as in this instance between 'living' and 'dead', is, as is pointed out more fully later, characteristic of truly primitive man. Another analogy of value is found in the fact that Imagination, with its functional area in the brain, develops earlier than the prefrontal area and the coordinative reason. Hence the early imaginative constructions of the child, its simple acceptance of the reality of the unseen, its invisible playmates, its mythopœic faculty, are reflections as in a clear mirror of a primitive trait.

(d) The *modern mind itself* is not so far removed from the primitive and savage that the study of it may not be valuable in helping us to understand that distant relative or ancestor of ours. 'Reversion' is a very real phenomenon in civilization. Primitive physical types reappear, primitive passions break volcanically to the surface, and primitive superstitions are found like fossils even in the upper strata of the modern mind, in the world as we know it. These are materials for the understanding of primitive man, just as his mind helps us to understand our own. It is probably an exaggeration, as Dr. Marett points out, to say with some anthropologists that 'the typical savage and the typical peasant of Europe stand exactly

on a par in respect to their power of general intelligence'.¹ But speaking of the endeavour to project ourselves into the life of the peasant, he says that

'it is no easy task. Yet we are near enough in sympathy to our own folk to make it well worth the trying. Then, using the peasant as our bridge, let us proceed as best we can to do the same for the remoter savage. From folk-lore to the anthropology of savages—that I am sure is the only sound method in social psychology.'²

There is, finally, one feature common to all human thought, from its lowest to its sublimest forms. It is that it always seeks a whole, and rests most gladly in some integration, some unification, whether of the inward or of the outward life. The philosopher, the man of science, the reformer, the man of faith, the mystic, all 'declare that they seek a country', and 'look for a city', that is, some rich and finely unified whole in theory or practical living. Thence we glance back to the beginning of it all in that low-browed shaggy ancestor of ours, with his bleak look regarding his world, seeking first, it is true, the mere unity of his animal body, but not long after pursuing the unification of his soul in the Unseen. We may thus find a string to hold together the beads of our studies of the primitive in man in the Quest for Unity.

¹ *Anthropology*, p. 151.

² *Psychology and Folk-Lore*, p. 18.

III

THE QUEST FOR UNITY

THE PRINCIPLE OF UNIFICATION

AN avenue of approach to the psychology of Primitive Man may be found in the principle of the Quest for Unity which it appears to us is fundamental in human nature. It is a tendency traceable and profoundly influential through all man's thinking and practical life as soon as, and wherever, he is recognizably human. Its presence in the mental life of civilized man needs no demonstration. Mr. Bosanquet defined Reason as 'the spirit of totality', and again as 'the *nisus* towards the whole'. Certainly, the characteristic activity of the mind, from the formation of a general idea to the great systems of Philosophy, from the humblest perception to the laws of Science and the Uniformity of Nature itself, from the vaguest conception of spirit to the monistic unity or the Supreme Personality of Religion, is the endeavour to create 'wholes' in thought, to organize experience into some form or other of coherent totality.

It was one of the works of Herbert Spencer's genius for generalization to show that this tendency in man's mind is but a particular instance of the general course of the evolutionary process. This is evident from his illustrations of his famous definition of that process as a passage of matter from 'an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a definite, coherent heterogeneity'¹ through a continuous series of 'integrations' and 'differentiations'. We shall find these latter terms useful in the exposition of the principle of the Quest for Unity; for we conceive that man's progress towards

¹ *First Principles* (4th edition), p. 307.

and in civilization proceeds by a series of Integrations, by the formation of more and more comprehensive and yet more definite wholes, which are linked together by successive Differentiations. What happens is that man with his unifying tendency forms a primitive integration, whether in his mental or practical life. This integration, on the emergence of some new power or idea in man, is found inadequate, and is broken through by a differentiation which applies the new power or idea to wider areas of experience. Out of the more differentiated phenomena and relations thus arrived at, the mind with its determined search for unity creates a new integration, larger, richer, and more organized than the former one. This again is followed by a differentiation; and so the process goes on, man ever becoming more capable of more comprehensive, higher, and finer integrations both of his own inner life and of his outward social relations.

Innumerable examples of this process could be given; but we shall merely mention a few which are of special interest to our inquiry and must come up for fuller treatment later. The most obvious illustration is that of the development of man's social life. 'Community' in human life passes through the successive integrations of the family, or more properly the original social unit of mother and child, the clan or herd, the tribe, the nation, and so onward to the dream or hope of social optimists, the world-community, what Mr. Graham Wallas has called 'the Great Society'. Between these successive unifications of man's life there are the appropriate differentiations, as his interests and powers expand. Another important instance is to be found in the inner life of man, in the growth of his mind. As his mental life rises up out of the animal stage, carrying with it into its highest moments some of its most primitive elements, the integrations of his thought can be observed merging into one another, from lower to

higher, from simpler to more complex, by barely perceptible gradations, through the stages of Instinctive Reflex, Perception, the Concept, and thus onward to the greater unifications of human reasoning, not stopping short of the great claim of Pascal, 'By space the universe encompasses and swallows me as an atom ; by thought I encompass it'.¹

The transition between the integrations, inseparable from each as the trough of the wave from the crests before and after, is made by a differentiation, resulting from the pressure of some new necessity, or the acquisition of a new power, or whatever change of man's inner life or outward circumstances compels his mind to grasp and organize, by its native hunger for unity, a wider range and content of experience. It will fall to us to trace in later pages a similar series of integrations in the development of Religion from its most primitive and generalized form—whether it be something analogous to 'Mana', as most British anthropologists hold, or the 'Sacred' as contrasted with the 'Profane', as MM. Hubert and Mauss say,² or some other 'indefinite, incoherent homogeneity'—on to the higher integration of Animism and belief in spirits, and so to more or less anthropomorphic and personalized gods, and beyond, by a tendency observable in most of the loftier religions, to the richest unity of all in Monotheism. Let these be sufficient illustrations in the meantime of the character of man's march upon the long road of his Quest for Unity.

The integrations, however, might with some truth be called resting-places, encampments, on that nomadic march. For in the evolution of man as in that of every other living thing there are action and reaction between Inertia and Variability. Throughout all the range of life, resting is easier than movement : there is economy

¹ *The Thoughts of Pascal* (Kegan Paul), p. 47.

² *Mélanges d'Histoire des Religions* (Alcan, Paris), 1909.

of energy, which, other things being equal, makes for survival. Hence the tendency of organisms to remain in an integration which 'works well', that is, in which there is more or less perfect equilibrium between the living creature and the conditions of its survival. So long as the adaptation of the organism to its surroundings is maintained, it may continue to exist unchanged for whole geological periods. This accounts for the persistence down to the present age of archaic forms of life, like *Peripatus*, almost an intermediate form between insect and worm, *Amphioxus*, a very primitive vertebrate, and the Marsupials. In like manner, man may remain within a certain integration of his life for immense ages, provided the adaptation of his needs and powers to the environment continues substantially the same, and no differentiation in his own life, or in that of his fellows, or in the external conditions of existence, calls for a new effort to secure survival or for an advance to a further stage in his development. Thus he remains for an enormous period at the Palaeolithic stage of culture, as regards his tools and weapons—no doubt because these unpolished flints are sufficient to ensure his survival against the natural conditions which threaten his existence, against the competing animals, and the members of his own species who are no better armed or equipped than he. The discovery or invention of fire was an integration of his life of incalculable importance, supplying perhaps the one condition which brought the human species, at least in the northern hemisphere, through the Ice Ages; but protection from wild animals and the cooking of food were probably the only uses of fire for vast ages of prehistoric time, as they are in many tribes at the present hour, while its employment for the smelting of metals belongs to comparatively very recent and much briefer periods.

Nevertheless, each integration, however long-lived, is mortal; and whatever new departure or variation

deals the death-blow leads man out into the wider areas and larger experience of a more differentiated life. And the process accelerates with human progress. The simple Palaeolithic culture in Europe may have lasted one or several hundred thousand years ; the Neolithic thirty thousand ; and the later ages may be compressed into less than twenty thousand ; while in the civilization of to-day the unifications and variations of life are innumerable, and a differentiation—an invention or discovery, for example,—which would have initiated a new age for early man, occurs in every decade. The characteristic of the process, however, which is of special interest to us, is the tendency traceable from beginning to end of it, the tendency in man towards unification of his life, which is part of his inner constitution. It is shared by all other living things, but in him it becomes a more and more conscious quest. We study it in primitive man, as the anatomist investigates simple organisms, in the expectation of finding there in simple, diagrammatic forms some essential qualities of man's nature in general.

In considering for a little the stage of Differentiation, it may be noted that its characteristic feature is that an earlier Integration has been broken up, and a new one has not yet been formed. It is like the Children of Israel, released from Egyptian bondage, in which a certain unification of order and appointed task was imposed upon them from above by their masters, bursting out into the larger and freer life of the wilderness. It is to them, however, a life of wandering, more vague, more diffused, less organized than the more unified existence on the lower plane of slavery, upon which, indeed, they are more than inclined to lapse back at times, were it not that a higher integration beckons them onward to settlement in the Promised Land, to nationhood, and the function of prophet of religion to the world. Any differentiation in this

sense means that a larger range of phenomena and activity is opened to man than before ; and for a time they elude the grasp of his mind and of his practical endeavour to reduce them to some unity of mental comprehension or some form of unified life. He wanders about in the wide new field, trying many wrong paths and culs-de-sac, making many false integrations, before his unifying power is sufficiently developed to form the new and higher integration.

Illustrations of this may be drawn from man's primitive mental development. His animal ancestor at the Instinctive stage moves within the small circle of an integration marked by certainties and regularities of connexion between sensations and their appropriate reflexes. The human creature's later increasing reliance on Perception opens to him a vastly wider world ; but the new power must grow immensely in range and refinement before its results even approach the sureness of Instinct. The conceptual stage supplies still better examples. The Concept, though the higher animals have it in sketchy outline, is chiefly a human achievement ; and as an integration it is attained by a process of mastering differentiations, which is difficult for the early type of mind. For instance, the concept of ' the dangerous ' is diffused for primitive man over countless things which to civilized man are not dangerous at all. The oddly-shaped stone, the bird on the left hand, the new-born child, the corpse, and a host of other harmless things are charged with peril for the savage, in the same way as the high explosive, the gun at full-cock, and an infected article are perilous to civilized man.

The allied concept of ' power ', which usually for the savage is power to harm and therefore dangerous, has the like vague and wide application to many classes of phenomena—they have in fact *mana*—to which nothing of the kind is ascribed by the cultivated mind. Here one has a first glimpse of the primitive mental

character which gives rise to Fetichism. Similarly, the vague and fluid nature of the concept 'living' for the primitive mind, which therefore finds it difficult to distinguish between animate and inanimate things, is discovered to be the origin of what Dr. Marett has named Animatism, the antecedent and more rudimentary form of Animism.

These are matters which will occupy our attention considerably at a later stage of this study. At the moment they illustrate the characteristic of primitive mentality we have been describing, namely, that its concepts, which gather together a number of particulars into a totality usable as a whole by thought, are of this indefinite, diffuse, and changeful nature, because the primitive mind has not yet acquired the capacity for unification, the power of integration, which is at its best in the trained civilized mind. The history of man's mind, from the shattering of the earthen vessel of the integration of Instinct, which he shared with the animals, to the highest forms of the integration of Intelligence which emerged out of it, is the story of its growth in the *grasp* which unifies the particulars of experience into more or less integrated wholes for thought, such as the concept, the general idea, the employable category, the inference, the scientific law, and the world-view of Philosophy or Religion.

Along with his power to integrate his inner world of mind so as to form various coherent unifications of thought, there grows for man the co-ordinate power to integrate his outer world, to create various forms of unity in the relations between him and his environment, and between himself and his fellows. We have already instanced the different embodiments of the principle of 'Community' as an example of this process, where integrations can be traced from the family or clan life up through the variously organized tribe right onward to the complex unifications of

civilized society. We shall concern ourselves presently with a further example, which must be dealt with in greater fullness since it is very important for our specific subject, an example in which unifications of the inner and outward life of primitive man border upon each other, and indeed intermingle. It is that in which the early human being is seen proceeding out of the animal stage, in which he is mainly within the Integration of Instinct, upward through the differentiations of Intelligence, which are the product of reflection upon Instinct,¹ to the wide and far-reaching, and yet in many respects definite and coherent, Integration of Custom.² In this the tribal consciousness and its habitual ideas, the 'représentations collectives' of M. Lévy-Bruhl and the school of Durkheim, are the inner side of that Integration, of which the various practices of tribal conduct, especially of Magic and Religion, are the outward manifestation in practical life.

The Integration of Custom, it is vital to observe, recovers much of the static nature and stability of the instinctive stage and of the Integration of Instinct, and thus resists differentiation to a remarkable degree, in virtue of its adaptation to immense variations of the environment—in other words, in virtue of its power of survival without the necessity of new departures. The stability and resistance to differentiation or change on the part of this Integration are so great that it retains a vast portion of uncivilized mankind at the cultural stage of Tribal Custom through countless generations, and but for the irruption of civilized influences and conditions would, and in many cases does, keep these people in a state of arrested development, resembling those primeval forms of animal and plant life which survive down to the present age. The Integration of Custom is, however, broken through at last by inevitable differentiations, such as, for instance, the mere

¹ See Chapter VI.

² See Chapter XXIII.

growth to unwieldy proportions of the Tribe itself, by unifications under single leadership and submission to the authority of great individuals, and by the greater leisure given by safety to reflect upon Custom with growing intelligence, and thus to introduce variations and new departures in its theories and practices. We shall presently trace the process by which the Integration of Custom is formed through differentiation from the Integration of Instinct by the operation upon it of increasingly intelligent reflection, in the course of which there emerge such customs and institutions as Totemism, Exogamy, and Taboo ; and we shall follow the progress beyond whereby Custom itself is differentiated into the structures of civilized thought and of the more highly organized social relations.

IV

THE ORGANIC BASIS OF UNIFICATION

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CO-ORDINATIVE BRAIN

BEFORE proceeding to deal with those great integrations in the life and thought of man which determine the early forms of his religion, it may advance the subject to examine the roots of this tendency to unification which is inveterate in him. The impulse in man to integrate his thought, to form coherent wholes out of his experience, is undoubtedly connected with the fact that biologically he is a unity, that as an organism he is an integration bound together by the close and sensitive bonds of life. In this sense man is a wave in the ocean tide of the evolutionary process as a whole. That process, from the gaseous mass postulated by the Nebular Hypothesis, integrating itself into stars and planets, onward to the mind of the astronomer integrating that hypothesis within itself, is, as Spencer showed, one of progress from integration to integration. Life, on its appearance in an inorganic world, introduces into evolution a new and powerful integrating force; and Mind continues the advance with its more and more conscious quest for unity, organizing man's inner experience into orderly and employable totalities, and unifying into the forms of society his relations to the world of things and men outside of him.

The growth of Individuality is but another way of describing the same process. There is a certain uniqueness in the lowliest form of organized life in that it keeps the whole world at bay, and admits into itself only that which serves the ends of its own existence. On the other hand, those animals are recognized to be lowly organized, not finely integrated, which can be divided

into two or more parts, each of which reconstitutes itself into a new animal, like Hydra, a primitive type of animal which has been divided and grafted almost like a plant. The higher animals cannot be so treated : they are more literally individual ; and the reason lies in the integrative action of a more complex and differentiated nervous system. It is the network of nerves, even before the brain is in any degree developed, which makes of the organism a unity, by constituting throughout it the circuit of afferent, central or transmittent, and efferent neurones, the unity manifesting itself in coherent ways of response to the environment and instinctive action upon it.

Professor Lloyd Morgan, in analysing the primary experiences of a moorhen which he observed making its first dive as an instinctive response to the impulse of fear, says :

‘ Just as there is one moorhen with interrelated parts and organs, one united nervous system correlating the incoming data of presentation and co-ordinating the outgoing nerve-impulse in responsive behaviour, so there grows up in correlation with the cortical processes, one experience for which the presentative data acquire meaning and become precepts for the guidance of future behaviour. Thus is it, I conceive, in the case of the moorhen : thus is it in the case of the human infant. Such in all cases is the starting point of the natural history of experience, the unification of which finds expression in behaviour and conduct.’¹

The unity of experience may thus be said to originate in the unity of the ‘experiencer’. Behind every experience of the moorhen there is the integration of the living creature itself, ‘one moorhen’, with its finely unified nervous system—so finely that an alarm sets in operation all the varied and complex actions involved in diving and swimming away from danger. When it dives, the bird is obeying the instinct which bids it maintain and protect the integration which may be

¹ *Instinct and Experience*, p. 20.

called its self. When, newly out of the egg, it pecks at food, it is seeking instinctively to enrich that integration. So when man, taken at the instinctive stage, seeks food, it is the maintenance or enrichment of the integration of his bodily life at which he aims; and when he leaps aside at a sudden danger, it is the integration of his animal body he instinctively protects.

In the passage quoted, however, there are evident in the life of the young moorhen two stages or types of integration. There is the integration which is constituted by the nervous system acting through purely instinctive reflexes, through the circuit, namely, of afferent nerve, spinal cord, and efferent nerve; but there is also the integration of incipient experience which, as Prof. Lloyd Morgan holds, we think rightly, is specially the work or creation of the growing brain. When the chick of a few days old pecks once or twice at an unsuitable insect and then refuses it altogether, there has been an elementary putting two and two together, a rudimentary judgement. This is as different from the swift response of the instinctive reflex as the slipping of a small stream into a pool, where it pauses and flows round and round before it emerges again, is from the unbroken flow of the same brook down a smooth slide of rock. It is the brain which gives pause to the swift passage of a reflex, which retains sensory impressions in memory so that they modify both perceptions and actions thereafter, and which opens even to the animal mind a variety of means for the satisfaction of its instincts and the attainment of its ends.

The Integration of Mind or Intelligence, which in man largely though not completely supersedes the Integration of Instinct, has thus for its organic basis the Brain. We have already noticed how the earlier and simpler integration of the instinctive stage in animal development is broken through by differentia-

tions introduced by intelligence, so that, for example, the sensory impression inducing an instinctive reflex passes into the successively higher unifications of Perception, the Concept, and all the various products of human reason. This we described as chiefly a growth in mental grasp, in the power of the mind to grasp the phenomena of experience in such a way as to unify them, to organize them into coherent totalities for thought. The organic instrument for these unifications is the Brain. As the unity of the bodily life in the animal, what one might call its unique selfhood, is behind all the integrations of its behaviour at the instinctive level—a unity constituted above all by its nervous system—so the unity of the brain, through its cellular interconnexions (synapses) within itself and its continuity with the rest of the nervous system, is behind all the integrations of intelligent experience.

The unifications of the mental life depend upon the degree of unification in the brain as a physical organ to an extent which is highly important for our discussion. For the brain, like every element in the evolutionary system, itself passes through an ascending series of integrations with the appropriate differentiations in between. It thus evolves from very generalized and indefinite types common to a wide range of vertebrate life, to more and more definite and specific forms. The advance can be traced step by step both in the human embryo and in the ascending scale of the brains of vertebrates through the anthropoid apes and (inferentially from the skull) fossil man, to the highest modern types. Beginning, at least perceptibly, in a slight bulbous expansion at the anterior end of the spinal cord, the brain is at first mainly an olfactory organ. We have already noted, however, that a new element in the advance of vertebrates is a reduction in the relative size and importance of the olfactory area, and a corresponding increase in the regions concerned

with the receiving and retention of visual images and auditory impressions. 'Man is the climax of a change towards eyemindedness which began in the lemurs.'¹ With the achievement of stereoscopic vision and its unification of images, and the dominance of the optical region of the brain, the ancestor of man acquires 'eyementality'.

This stage in the evolution of brain and mind is of great interest for our inquiry because it is probable that from this point and for a vast period onwards the prehuman being thought (so to call it) largely in pictures. The experience of the eyeminded subhuman creature would take the form in the mind of a series of snapshots of things and events, to use Bergson's metaphor; but the cinematographic picture would be like one taken too slowly, and the images would be ill-connected, unco-ordinated, and issue therefore in impulsive action resembling the reactions of instinct. There may thus have been a predominantly imaginative period in the very early history of man, in which he thought chiefly by seeing in the mind phenomena and events pictorially, and even visualized himself doing things. This period is perhaps recapitulated in that well-marked age in children (say, between the ages of three and six) when the imaginative powers are often singularly active, in gravely-told myths of their own doings, invisible playmates and the like, only to vanish usually with the acquisition of facts and the development of the reasoning powers. It is a type of mentality we shall consider at a later stage with reference, in particular, to its influence upon the primitive forms of man's religion, such as the visualizing of spirits and ghosts in Animism.

Continuing, in the meanwhile, the summary description of the evolution of the brain, we observe that the cortex has been developing towards the frontal

¹ *What is Man*, J. Arthur Thomson (Methuen), p. 70.

region in the form of the *neo-pallium* ; and at the same time as this new mass of brain-cells gradually in the upward progress of the vertebrates spreads over and covers the olfactory and visual region, the specific co-ordinative power of the mind, of which the neo-pallium is the organ, develops with it. The characteristic activity of Reason, that of forming totalities in thought, thenceforward comes increasingly into play ; and the special organ of this new integrating quality of mind is the cortex. It is ' new ' not absolutely, for it is present very early in rudimentary forms of co-ordination, but in its predominance and command of man's future.

The importance of this gradual integration of the brain itself as a physical organ, and the consequent slow growth of its integrating power in thought, for our present point, lies in this, that at the transition period when man is becoming human and passing from the Integration of Instinct to the Integration of Intelligence, his brain is not yet fully integrated, and his power of co-ordination is therefore far below that of civilized man. The difference between the skull and also the brain of Palaeolithic man and those of the modern higher races is not in comparative size. The average cubic capacity of the Neanderthal skulls may even be greater than that of the modern European. There was, according to Prof. Elliot Smith, at one stage of animal evolution, a general rise in size and weight of brain in proportion to the body in all the leading mammalia. It was as though Nature were experimenting with brains of large size as a means of integration, in the hope, to speak very anthropomorphically, that the greater mass of brain-cells would be the better able to grasp and unify the phenomena of experience. A better method still, however, was found in the expedient of fissures and convolutions, which enable the brain to be closely packed, and secure a more economical and effective form of unification.

A further improvement in integration was the development of the frontal region of the brain, with its specific function of co-ordination and the creation of wholes in the mind. Accordingly, it is not surprising to find that the chief difference between the primitive and the modern skull is in the frontal or prefrontal area; and the most striking deficiency in the early type of brain was apparently in the low development of the cortex, the physical organ of the co-ordinating and integrating functions of the mind, whereby it is capable of reflection, forming general ideas, reasoning from cause to effect, and other activities of the highest types of thought. This is actually the difference between the brains of existing primitive savages, such as the Australian aborigines on the one hand, and those of cultured man on the other. The former are smaller on the average in proportion to the body, less convoluted, and notably less developed in the frontal region of the cortex, upon which the higher powers of intelligence and reflection apparently depend. This is the opinion of Dr. Bernard Hollander, who adds a remark which is specially interesting in view of the influence of pause or delay in the brain, already noted as leading to the differentiation of reflective mind from the earlier reflexive, instinctive system.

‘The larger the frontal lobes, the greater the power of inhibition, suspending and postponing the immediate and direct pursuit of an end, a step which lies at the root of all progress, civilization and morality. The larger and more perfect the frontal lobes, the more reasoned adaptation enters into the action of instinctive tendencies, and the greater the self-control.’¹

The statement of Bianchi which he quotes illustrates the same point negatively :

‘Removal of the frontal lobes does not so much interfere with the perceptions taken singly as it does disintegrate the personality and incapacitate for synthetizing groups of representations.’

¹ *In Search of the Soul*, vol. ii, p. 92.

In view of these facts we may now consider the mind of primitive man at that stage in his evolution at which he is just emerging out of the Integration of Instinct. At that point his life, like that of the higher animals, is dominated by the habitual connexions of instinct, but it shows intelligence in selecting the means to the ends of instinct. It is thus moving towards the higher Integration of Intelligence, in which man reflects upon the phenomena of his life, including his instincts, and forms theories and modes of action based upon these reflections. In so considering primitive man, we see him approaching this new task with a very imperfect instrument, his imperfectly integrated brain. That physical basis of the intelligent co-ordination of experience is far from complete. Like the hand of his early subhuman ancestor, with the imperfectly 'opposable' thumb, capable of hanging on to things—prehensile fashion—but not of grasping them all round as a whole, comprehensively, so the brain of primitive man is deficient in grasp, in the power to take in things in the form of wholes, in a word, in *comprehension*. Accordingly, when this type of man proceeds to integrate his experience by means of his intelligence, the true integrations escape him in a multitude of ways. He jumps at conclusions unreflectively, in the swift impulsive manner of instinct but without its innate accuracy, and arrives at false conclusions.

In place, for example, of the instinctive association of danger with flight, he forms the concept 'dangerous'. But his concepts are vague, fluid, incompletely grasped; and 'dangerous' includes innumerable things not really dangerous, while it excludes many things, to his cost, which are actually perilous. So, where instinct for his animal ancestor connected effect with cause unreflectively, as moving reeds with lurking foe, in such fashion as to induce flight, the savage, attempting with his crude intelligence to make causal connexions,

appears almost to exhaust the possibilities of error. He connects things as cause and effect which are not causally connected, as whistling or top-spinning with stormy winds, and establishes that almost universal law of his crude science, that like is the cause of like, which is the foundation of his Imitative Magic. At the same time he misses true causal relations in the most astonishing way. Thus natural causes of death are unknown to the Australian tribes who ascribe decease invariably to the sorcery of an enemy ; and some savages seem ignorant of the connexion between sexual intercourse and the birth of children.

The primitive mind, then, in attempting the higher unifications of intelligent reflection instead of obeying unreflective instinct, has in the generalized brain of primitive man an imperfect instrument. Such integrations of thought are difficult by reason of the undeveloped condition of the frontal, co-ordinative areas of the brain. This accounts for the many strange and crude forms of customary idea and practice, which appear as inferior to the steady instinctive accuracy and marvellous adaptation of means to ends in such 'lower' creatures as ants and bees on the one hand, as they are to the sanest and loftiest judgements and conduct of civilized men on the other.

The intermediate stage between the Integration of Instinct and the integrations of modern thought is the Integration of Custom, the custom of the Clan or the Tribe. Here something of the stability of instinct is recovered. As Bagehot said, 'A cake of custom was necessary for making the mould of civilization, and hardening the soft fibre of early man'.¹ The aberrations of the individual mind, which, using crude imagination and half-formed intelligence and thus following endless strange fancies, might be infinite and turn the tribal world, if indeed it survived, into an assem-

¹ *Physics and Politics*, p. 27.

blage of the insane, are checked by the necessities of the common interest of the group. The social instinct working through intelligence becomes the tribal mind, with common ideas and customary ways of thinking and doing which command the individual with almost the unquestioned authority of the instinctive. There is in this Integration of Custom so complete an adaptation to many kinds of environment, providing safety and other means of survival which maintain an equilibrium with the conditions of existence, that a great part of savage mankind remains for ages at this stage. Fortunately for human progress, pressure from within or without the Tribe, the mere increase in numbers, epoch-making invention or discovery such as the domestication of animals or smelting of ores, or some striking change in the environment, breaks up the crust of custom; and man moves out from that Egyptian bondage in search of his new Land of Promise, to be achieved by the struggles and conquests of reflective thought.

INSTINCT AND INTELLIGENCE

THE two great unifications in man's mental life, the Integration of Instinct and the Integration of Intelligence, are not rigidly separable, for the reason that they are successive stages in the life of a growing thing ; and they are not easily distinguishable, chiefly because of the great variety of meanings given to the word instinct. As Prof. Lloyd Morgan says, ' no two writers use the term in quite the same sense '. Bergson's statements on the point are illuminating. ' All concrete instinct is mingled with intelligence, as all real intelligence is penetrated by instinct.' And further, ' Neither intelligence nor instinct lends itself to rigid definition : they are tendencies, and not things'.¹ He also gives a picturesque expression of the distinction in the words : ' instinct perfected is a faculty of using or even constructing organized instruments : intelligence perfected is the faculty of making and using unorganized instruments.'² On this principle, an organized instrument is a part of the creature's body : an unorganized instrument is a tool which may be used for the making of other tools. Thus the human hand is an organized instrument, using which in purely instinctive fashion man would hardly advance beyond the chimpanzee ; but the hand, using, under the direction of intelligence, unorganized instruments like the stick and the flint stone, is on the way to all the triumphs of art and industry. Instinct no more than enables the animal to adapt itself to the environment : intelligence empowers man to master the environment and make of the world a more or less organized unity under his dominion.

¹ *Creative Evolution*, p. 143.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 147.

It is of importance to this distinction to observe that at the instinctive stage man's life-energy is devoted to the integration of his body, while at the reflective stage he is much occupied with the integration of his mind, seeking to make rational wholes of his experience. At the period in his evolution when he is still the animal, prehuman, his whole concern is to maintain his body as a living integration, to preserve it from the disintegration of privation, hurt, or death. And since the final dissolution cannot for ever, and rarely for long, be pushed from the door, Nature, 'careful of the type', or to express it otherwise, the urge of the evolutionary process, drives man to seek a new integration in his offspring. This is still an endeavour after bodily integration, taking the form of a bodily appetite, the sex impulse, which satisfies the self and yet goes beyond it towards the larger integration of the race.

This tendency to preserve and enhance the integration of his body embraces what is commonly known as the supreme 'instinct of self-preservation'; and it is manifest that the same integrating impulse is the parent of a whole family of instincts properly so called, the Food Instinct, the Flight Instinct, the Sex Instinct, and the Herd, or, as we prefer to say, the Social, Instinct. Prof. W. M. McDougall says that 'the instincts are differentiations of the will to live'; and J. Varendonck regards them as various expressions of the tendency in the animal to 'adaptation', namely, to the environment, adding, however, that consciousness or intelligence is simply a more developed form of the same tendency.¹ These are statements in other terms of our position, which is that the process of integration which is the universal method of Evolution as a whole, takes the form in man of the integration of his bodily life by means of his instincts at the animal or instinctive stage. This merges by gradual differentia-

¹ *Evolution of the Conscious Faculties* (Allen and Unwin), p. 223.

tions into the integration of his mental life, which with its more and more numerous subordinate integrations constitutes the Integration of Mind or Intelligence.

The physical processes, and the differences of nervous organization, underlying the two integrations of instinct and intelligence, are admirably stated by Prof. Lloyd Morgan. He sets out

‘to defend the hypotheses that intelligent guidance is the function of the cerebral cortex with its distinguishing property of consciousness; that the co-ordination involved in instinctive behaviour, and in the distribution of physiological impulses to the viscera and vascular system, is the primary function of the lower brain-centres; that, in instinctive behaviour as such, consciousness correlated with processes in the cerebral cortex is, so to speak, a mere spectator of organic and biological occurrences at present beyond its control; but that, as spectator, it receives information of these occurrences through the nerve-channels of connexion between the lower and higher parts of the brain.’¹

The archetype of Instinct, then, is the reflex action of the most primitive forms of animal life. There are simpler and more complex reflexes; but the characteristic features are, first, the three-linked chain of receptor, conductor, and effector (to use the terms of Sir Charles Sherrington), the afferent nerve, the spinal cord, or the lower brain-centres, and the efferent nerve; second, the speed or practical immediacy with which the nerve impulse is sent through the chain; and, third, their independence of the influence of the cortex of the brain. Experiments with decerebrate or ‘spinal’ animals show that in many of their normal activities, which they continue to perform when the cerebrum has been removed, the cerebral cortex normally sustains the role of passive ‘spectator’; which means that these manifold movements, which are instinctive in Prof. Lloyd Morgan’s sense, that is,

¹ *Instinct and Experience* (Methuen), pp. 7-8.

which are the work of the spinal cord and the sub-cortical centres without the intervention of the cortex, are yet within the cognizance of the cortex through the connexions of the nervous system as a whole. A great part of the instinctive life of civilized man comes under this category. Starting at a loud noise or a sudden appearance, blinking the eyes at a threatened blow, coughing, sneezing, and so forth, are accomplished without the intervention of the cortex, although they immediately become part of the experience of the cortex and material for memory and reflection.

These are survivals of the Integration of Instinct within the Integration of Intelligence. But the course of Evolution in general is along the line of integration ; and the nervous system of man is no exception. The higher unification of cortical control, in virtue of its better adaptation to the animal's increasingly differentiated life, supersedes progressively integration through the spinal system and the sub-cortical centres. The higher animals, such as the large carnivora, for instance, in hunting their prey act doubtless upon many reflexes, both simple and complex, and upon racial inherited connexions between scent and movement, hunger and seeking, sight of the game and stealthy approach, and the like ; but should exceptional circumstances, especially if they present an obstacle, intervene, say, a suspicion of danger, a new kind of prey and so on, there comes a Pause : and then a new method is taken of dealing with the new situation. This is most probably the work of the cortex, the elementarily reflective brain forming a mental integration which thereupon influences and governs action.

In turning now to our prehuman ancestor at that stage of his evolution at which he must be classed as a higher animal and yet is breaking out of the Integration of Instinct through various differentiations towards the Integration of Intelligence—the stage, per-

haps, at which the Java Man, *Pithecanthropus erectus*, had arrived—we find him to an overwhelming degree the creature of instinct. In seeking his food or hunting his prey, in escaping his enemies, in mating, and so forth, he acts on swift reflexes, living an impulsive life, obeying impulses that flash from the sensory receptor to the motor effector like electricity along a wire. But he has also a fairly developed cortex, superior to that of any other animal. This Brain is at first mainly a ‘spectator’ of man’s instinctive life ; but the integrating tendency which is inherent in the living organism and is the main current of the evolutionary stream itself, shifts the centre of gravity, in the nervous chain between sensation and behaviour, from the spinal cord and the subcortical centres to the more powerfully integrating mass of the cortex. The founders of modern psychology, such as Romanes, had already pointed out that the mere material substance of the cortex with its millions of cells must set up a certain mechanical resistance and so produce delay, the Pause, namely, which, however infinitesimal, is the first condition of true reflection.

The process unfolds further as we recall that the tendency towards integration—the essential urge of Evolution itself—which is present even in inorganic nature, and which is the very energy of life in the humblest living thing, is most varied and intense in Mind, and mightiest above all in the mind of man. We may therefore conceive of the organ of thought, the cortical area of the brain, as thrilling in every cell that is awake and under the stimulus of some necessity or excitement, and through all the synaptic interconnexions of the cells, with the impulse to integrate, to make a whole which preserves and enriches life out of the exciting elements in the situation, to ‘find peace’, as it were, in some unification of life within itself or with the outer world. It is in some such

fashion as this that the swift passage of the instinctive impulse is arrested and there is substituted the Pause of deliberation, which allows of storing in memory, and of that co-ordination of a sensory impression with a memory, by which a mere reflex is transmuted into Perception, Attention, and other beginnings of reflective thought.

The resistance which induces delay in the response to sensory impressions, in place of the immediate flashing on to the motor nerves of the instinctive reflex, may come not only from within, from the obstacle of the brain substance itself and from the integrating action of the mind; it may arise from without, from the environment. An example may be taken from the constructive instinct in bees. The reflexes of instinct whereby the workers build up the combs may go on for many generations uninterruptedly till one day the bees find themselves confronted with a peculiar shape in the form of the hive. There is a pause of consciousness of the obstacle, and then out of that delay there issues, like Athene from the head of Zeus, a complete adaptation of means to end, a new method of working which, in virtue of its employment of experience in the creation of a new integration, has the quality of intelligence. It is in this resistance of the external world to the smooth machine-like workings of instinct, the interposition of obstacles to its reflexes from without, that Bergson finds the very origin of consciousness. He says, 'where consciousness appears, it does not so much light up the instinct itself as the thwartings to which instinct is subject; it is the deficit of instinct, the distance between the act and the idea, that becomes consciousness'. He has already suggested that intelligence issues from 'the very insufficiency of the natural means at man's disposal for defence against his enemies, against cold and hunger. This insufficiency, when we strive to fathom its signi-

ficance, acquires the value of a prehistoric document ; it is the final leave-taking between intelligence and instinct.'

This is probably true to the prehistoric facts. It is legitimate to imagine the prehuman ancestor at the point at which some immense 'insufficiency' of his instinctive reflexes presents itself to him, say, at the stage when he made his probably enforced descent from the trees, and assumed more or less the erect position. He is faced now with new situations for which the earlier integrations of his instinctive life are inadequate. New reflexes are indeed being formed, such as those for speed in running in place of climbing ; but by themselves they would be insufficient. On the other hand, this subhuman being has acquired a new integrating organ in the brain, especially the cortex. The necessities of countless desperate situations set the brain working with the primeval effort of integration ; the cells of the cortex are awake and throbbing with the sense of need, and at the same time with the innate tendency to integrate some whole response of action which shall ensure safety and survival ; and thus the 'will to live', which, according to Dr. McDougall, differentiates into all the instincts at the instinctive stage, using now the new instrument of the brain, makes a novel response to the situation by means of a new integration. In this there is consciousness of the obstacle to the smooth working of instinctive life and of insufficiency to cope with the difficulty ; but there is also consciousness of the novel means of meeting the peril or the need, whence it is definitely an integration of intelligence. It is in this way that the first discoveries or inventions of primitive man probably arrived. The danger, whether of want or of capture and death, impelled the developing brain to the new integration of seeking refuge in a cave or of using a stone as a weapon, or calling the kin or the horde,

by a call with something of meaning in it, to the aid of the individual. In these, enregistered in memory, which itself is a developing power of the integrating brain, one may find not improbably the origin of cave-dwelling, of the use of tools and weapons, and of human speech, and thus of the foundations of intelligent and civilized life.

An interesting sidelight on this element of pause or delay, which breaks through the Integration of Instinct with the differentiations of consciousness, and is the preliminary condition of reflection, is given by the analysis of Attention in Miss Washburn's book, *The Animal Mind*. 'In attention', she remarks, 'the details of the object attended to become clear and distinct. That is, attention is a state where discrimination is improved.'¹ She notes further the suspension of other reactions, in stillness, holding the breath, and so forth, during keen attention. We have here once more the pause which interrupts the smooth flow of instinct, and is the preliminary to more or less definite consciousness of an object. But indeed to trace, however briefly, the development of attention, is to pursue the growth of thought from that first dim awareness up towards the rich integrations of intelligence and reflection, and even, if desired, to the richer unifications of man's moral idealism. At the lowest end of the scale there is stillness, motionlessness, of the primitive animal assimilating itself to its environment in order to escape danger, in response to sensations of scent or sound. An immense advance follows in the development of eye-mentality. As Dr. Washburn says, 'the rabbit or wild bird crouching motionless close to the ground, watching each movement of a possible enemy, suggests strongly to our minds a condition of breathless attention'.² The focussing of the

¹ *The Animal Mind*, Margaret Floy Washburn (Macmillan), 1917, p. 318.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 321.

eyes to produce a single image, and at the same time an ever more clearly discriminated one, doubtless greatly stimulated the integrating activity of the early brain. The eye-minded brain thinks in images. The crouching motionless rabbit or wild bird has an image or series of images in its mind of what its enemy is doing, and possibly an image of what he is about to do, an ideal image, therefore, which moves the creature to run or take some alternative mode of instinctive action besides that of simulated immobility.

The precursor of man for long periods had this eye-mentality. He must have thought in images, inner representations of the world and of himself. But with the growth of his brain its integrating quality took the form of incipient imagination. That is, in place of a flickering cinematograph of images in the mind, there was a grasp upon these to integrate them into new totalities, namely, ideal images, visions of things that might happen, of things he might do, of himself doing things in the future, of what might be made of or done with things. And then came Speech. The word made the image into an idea. A thousand images are gathered into one general idea, represented by a word, and then, as images, forgotten. 'The highest grade of attention, the final triumph of vital importance over mere intensity of stimulation, is to be found where the focus of attention is occupied by an idea or train of ideas.'¹ Attention thus devoted to what is within the mind is essentially reflection; and man, his life dominated no longer by his instinctive reflexes but by the integrations of intelligence, is now *Homo sapiens*.

With a view to observing the implications of these facts of primitive man's psychology for his moral and religious life, we may glance back upon the process just outlined. It is a process of continuous integration in

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 322.

the line of Evolution as a whole. To begin no farther back than the plant, where there is the integration of Life without instinct, there is in growth from the seed an unseeing pursuit of the integration of the perfect plant. In animals the integration, which is mainly that of Instinct, is accomplished by means of a more and more connected and sensitive nervous system, working, however, through unconscious reflexes for the most part. With the appearance and development of the brain there comes at first a vague awareness of these reflex operations, which, with the interposition of obstacles and difficulties in the way of the smooth flow of instinct, becomes an increasingly definite and discriminating consciousness. The ends of the life-integration in the higher animals are to some extent visualized; and the method of action, as in hunting the prey, is varied with variations in the outer circumstances and the behaviour of the object. In Man the unification of his life is gradually taken over by the ever more co-ordinated and co-ordinating brain, which, aided by speech and the growing power of abstraction, turns the images or visualizations of the ends of life into ideas. With these ideas the mind works integratively, pursuing them within itself, combining them into tentative or final totalities, projecting their realization into the future, making them ideals yet to be realized. The Quest for Unity thus becomes the Quest for the Ideal.

VI

PRIMITIVE REFLECTION UPON INSTINCT

TOTEMISM AND EXOGAMY

REFLECTION, having in it the metaphor of a mirror, suggests a stillness in the mind, such that images are seen in it, quiet and contemplation. Consciousness awakens at a pause in the mental life of the higher animal, a delay in the flow of the instinctive reflexes created by some obstacle or difficulty which hereditary adjustments cannot meet. This pressure of difficulty in the environment of early man would act as a stimulus to his new and peculiarly rich endowment of the co-ordinating brain, now taking over life's integrations. Such an event as the descent of the arboreal ancestor from the trees, involving many new adaptations, probably called the new activity strongly into play, when conscious adjustments, ever more intelligent in their imaged connexion of means to end, begin to supplement the reflexes of instinct. There is much to be said for the view of some authorities that the Glacial Period, making life for primitive man much more difficult, and demanding from existing forms of life new conditions of survival on pain of extinction, impelled the primitive mind—relying on its sole resource, the co-ordinating brain—to create certain novel integrations which should make that survival possible.¹ Amongst the integrations achieved in this age-long emergency by the primitive mind and brain, may have been fire or cave-dwelling or the use of stone weapons and tools, or all of these. It may be noted that these integrations are not adjustments within the body itself, such as the animals evolve to meet a chang-

¹ Cf. *Explorations in Turkestan*, Raphael Pumpelly, p. 66.

ing situation, like long hair against the cold or sharp teeth for tearing flesh, 'organized instruments' in Bergson's sense. They are 'unorganized instruments', integrations, that is, of the environment, of things outside man's body, and therefore entitled to be called inventions or discoveries of Intelligence, the first-fruits of his intellectual mastery of the world.

A further step in mental development was doubtless made from the vantage ground of the comparative safety provided by these new integrations of mind and the accession of power they brought to man. Within his cave, or beside his fire, he has that security from the restless search for food and incessant watchfulness against and flight from enemies, to which impulsive and reflexive movement is at an earlier stage the natural 'answer-back'. He has in a small but real degree leisure to think, to contemplate, to reflect. Palaeolithic man in the recesses of his cavern and Pheidias in the peace of the Greek city-state may both devote long hours to the creations of their art; but they are different mainly in the fact that outside his cave the primeval artist is the hunting and hunted animal, depending largely on his instinctive reflexes to escape a hundred perils, while the Greek may go and philosophize in the Agora.

It is thus true of man's life as it is of a river, that the proportion of stillness is the measure of reflection. The security of a late stage in his history, like the pastoral stage, gives him leisure to 'consider the heavens' and evolve a solar mythology; while the safety and quiet times of the agricultural level enable him to add to the earlier myths those of fertility spirits and deities. But we are concerned with an earlier period, the earliest of man's history as human. In emerging from the Integration of Instinct, and presented by the inventions or discoveries of Intelligence to which we have referred, with a certain

deliverance from the restless and impulsive life of the animal, man has opportunity to look on at things and even at himself, and to advance to purely mental integrations, such as general ideas and explanations of events. As he is, however, on the verge of the instinctive life, it is aspects of that life, naturally, which are the subjects of his thinking. The problems over which early man wrinkled his low forehead in the first efforts of concentrated thought, were simply the problems of his bodily life, how to get food, to keep safe, and to reproduce his kind. These problems, solved earlier at the animal stage by instinctive connexions between sensory impressions and motor impulses, in the main, are now increasingly to be met by integrations of intelligence, by generalizations, rudely classified results of observation, inferences, plans, and even theories. In place of the swift nervous circuit between hunger, sight or scent of food, and movement towards it, there is pause for consideration as to how the supply of food may be increased ; instead of the animal reactions to fear such as flight or lying low, there is classification of things as dangerous or not ; and around the various impulses of the sex-instinct there play innumerable crude theories as to its mystery, power, pleasure, and peril.

The theories are crude, the generalizations are faulty to an almost incredible degree, because the mind's instrument in forming them is imperfect. The co-ordinating brain, the organ of these unifications, is defective in grasp, in this very power of creating unities of idea, of judgement, and a train of reasoning. It is the strangeness to us of so much of the reasoning of primitive man which has led a school of French sociologists to postulate for him a radically different mentality from that of civilized man. This, as we shall argue later, is unnecessary. The thought of the savage is not ' prelogical ' ; but his logic is hurried and

impulsive like his instinctive actions, though without their accuracy. He 'puts two and two together'; but his 'two' is often our three or five. He reasons of cause and effect, but he makes countless false causal connexions. As Sir James Frazer says, the errors of savage men are 'not wilful extravagances or the ravings of insanity but simply hypotheses'.¹ The hypotheses are extravagant, and to us almost insane, for two reasons. The one is that they are formed by intelligence after the ancestral fashion of instinct, that is, in sudden, impulsive, unreflective ways; and the influence of the instincts, still very strong, as in the desires of food and sex, and above all the instinctive emotion of fear, makes man jump to conclusions which are often wildly erroneous.

The other reason is that the unifying power of the mind, through the co-ordinating brain, is crude and undeveloped; and those unifications which by their grasp and coherence imply accurate discrimination, such as exact generalizations and inferences, are at that stage impossible. Modern theories of the Subconscious make much of the influence of primitive instincts, lying *perdu* in that somewhat hypothetical region, and breaking up at times to the surface of consciousness in order to affect profoundly even highly intelligent thought: and Mr. John Galsworthy has crystallized in a penetrating essay the truth of the extraordinary power of unreasoning, instinctive Fear to drive kindly, civilized people into acts of savage cruelty, and to account for the inhumanities of reigns of terror, reprisals, and modern warfare.² The point is that man theorizes at the stage of intelligence with which we are dealing, but that, while his mind is still primitive in character or when ancestral instinct lays its spell upon his thought, his theories are infinitely more stupid

¹ *Taboo and Perils of the Soul*, p. 422.

² *The Inn of Tranquillity*, p. 89.

and often much more cruel than the impulses of animal instinct. In escaping from the Egyptian bondage of Instinct he has many strange wanderings in the wilderness of error before him, until by the growing integrations of Intelligence he arrives at, and begins to conquer the Promised Land of intellect, morality, and religion.

These limitations and aberrations are naturally most evident at the most primitive stages of man's intelligent life, when he is nearest to the realm of Instinct ; and we have now to observe, in certain salient examples of his chief instincts, the formation of those crude conceptions and theories concerning the phenomena of his instinctive life, which, under the influence mainly of tribal associations and the Group-Consciousness, become later his deeply rooted and widespread customs, and go to form the Integration of Custom. The psychology of these processes will be dealt with at a later point in more detail: they are brought forward now in a general way as examples of the working of savage intelligence upon the concerns of its own instincts.

I. *The Food Instinct and Totemism.*

Totemism has the appearance of an extremely primitive custom ; for, while there are traces of it in very many peoples and in all quarters of the world, it seems to have broken up, in most cases, under the disintegrating influence of later conditions and ideas, leaving fossil remains in animal names of tribes, rites of communion, and so forth. Dr. A. W. Howitt says :

'It has always seemed to me that the origin of totems and totemism must have been in so early a stage of man's social development that traces of its original structure cannot be expected in tribes which have long passed out of the early conditions of matriarchal times.'¹

Totemism, in our view, is the outcome of primitive reflection upon the Food-Instinct, or rather on its

¹ *Native Tribes of South-East Australia* (Macmillan), p. 152.

subject-matter, combined with other elements such as the feeling of kin or the instinct of kinship. Instead of the simple reflexes between the perception of the food-animal, or the image of it awakened by hunger, on the one hand, and on the other, the impulse to go on the hunt for it, which man shares with the higher animals, there is reflection upon the pleasantness of the food, the value and even beneficence of the food-creature, the usefulness of increasing its numbers; and he concentrates his primitive brain upon the problem how to make it more abundant, and especially in times of desperate scarcity to bring it when absent. Dr. Howitt states correctly the view of Sir Baldwin Spencer and Mr. Gillen, and also of Sir J. G. Frazer, when he says that 'in Australian tribes the primary function of a totemistic group is to ensure by magic a supply of the object which gives its name to the totemistic group'.¹ Here come in the rude efforts of the savage's Magic, based on crude inferences such as that like is the cause of like, his potent spells, his rudimentary prayers, all designed to solve that food problem by making the food-animal come in greater numbers.

The instinct of kin or blood-relationship adds its suggestion to the struggling intelligence. The beneficent creature when eaten becomes 'one-flesh' with the savage, how natural then to think of it as 'all-one-flesh' with the tribe it nourishes. For example :

'As a clan consists of those in whose veins the same blood runs, and who are therefore one flesh, the totem animal is spoken of by the Mount Gambier tribe, for instance, as being their tumanang, i.e. their flesh, and is treated in all respects as a clansman.'²

It is no great step further to think of it as the ancestor. The ceremonies of blood-brotherhood by which strangers and their own youth are admitted to the

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 152.

² *Totemism*, Frazer (Macmillan), p. 101.

tribe are used to symbolize unity with the totem. The forms of address in conciliatory and supplicatory prayer slip easily into the terms of kinship and of ancestry, as the Red Indian of the buffalo totem addresses the totem as 'Grandfather'. Add the element of mystery or mysterious power, never far from the threshold of the savage's mind, to his reflection on the food animal, and you have the rudiments of awe and reverence, which need but the later evolution of ideas of spirit to raise the totem to the status of the tribal god.

Totemism is thus a striking example of the process whereby man, seeking at first the simplest kind of unity within himself, the satisfaction of an instinctive desire and a unification of his body through his food, passes by means of intelligence into an increasingly differentiated and higher unity with his environment, and into that often closely woven unity which is the Tribe. It is also an instance of how the differentiation of intelligence works upon the earlier integration of instinct, and how reflection, in forming new integrations, brooding upon an instinct, creates out of it a Tribal Custom.

2. *The Sex Instinct and Exogamy.*

The Instinct of Sex, reflected upon by primitive man, leads to his innumerable varieties of custom and theory as applied especially to Adolescence and Marriage, and gives rise to many strange cults and barbarous practices. The frequent wildness of the theories and the strangeness and luxuriance of the customs point to a strong primitive impulse. It is fundamentally once more the urge of the evolutionary process itself, seeking new integrations by means of differentiation. The impulse has become a powerful passion, having broken from the regulation of pure instinct with its restrictions such as seasonal pairing, effects of climate, and other

limitations, in the direction of control by Intelligence, which, however, owing to its powers being undeveloped, is for long in this respect like Phaethon in charge of the chariot and steeds of Apollo. We shall leave aside other products of savage man's consideration of this instinct, and use as our example of the process the theory and practice of Exogamy.

Exogamy or Outbreeding, marriage outside the kin, however kinship may be conceived, is not by any means universal in primitive life. It shares the field with Endogamy, marriage within the kin. 'There is no doubt', says Prof. J. Arthur Thomson, 'that man has given much thought to enforcing some degree of endogamy.'¹ It is easy to see how, when he began to reflect upon the sex relation, man would find reasons such as race pride, dislike of strangers, and so on, for marrying within his own folk. But Endogamy has a certain biological value, as is well known to breeders of pedigree stock; and, as Prof. L. T. Hobhouse says, 'what has survival value becomes organized into a hereditary structure in the mind, in other words, an instinct'.² It is difficult, however, to discover an instinct or instinctive tendency corresponding to the practice of Endogamy. The most that can be said, perhaps, is that behind it is the general urge in Nature towards integration, which moves in the direction of consolidation of the tribe and the transmission of qualities which have survival value. Endogamy has rather the appearance of being the product of reflection upon the sex relation in general, which has evoked so great a variety of custom and tribal practice in many other directions. The highly sophisticated idea of royal blood is an example, where marriage beneath the sacred caste was impossible in Europe even to recent times, and the Egyptian Pharaohs were still more

¹ *What is man?* (Methuen), p. 179.

² *Mind in Evolution*, p. 73.

logical in marrying their sisters. The preference for marriage within the kin, therefore, in so far as it may be regarded as an unconscious tendency without the right to be called an instinct, is probably best described as a form of the tendency in inorganic and organic nature to Inertia, to the preservation of integrations existing and achieved, which the primitive and even the civilized mind, reflecting on it, translates into a customary and often highly elaborated practice.

Exogamy, on the other hand, is connected with the profound urge in Nature towards Variability, which is another name for differentiation; and differentiation is the movement of the evolutionary process toward not the preservation of existing integrations but the production of new and richer integrations. Here the impulse, the objection to the marriage of near kin, is so strong that it is commonly regarded as an 'instinct'. Dr. Freud, in applying his characteristic theories to the subject of *Totem and Taboo*, speaks in general of 'the savage's dread of incest'. Certainly the repugnance is almost as universal as that which induces respect for pregnancy throughout the animal kingdom, and which has so obvious a survival value. The idea, very widely held, that it is an 'instinctive' repugnance is supported by what are supposed to be the disastrous effects of human endogamy. But closer and more scientific investigation has shown that the evil results of inbreeding are not so self-evident as has been imagined. The evils observed may not be the effect of inbreeding at all; and endogamy has frequently the advantage of improving the stock by transmitting desirable qualities. Prof. J. A. Thomson quotes the authorities East and Jones as saying: 'Inbreeding is not in itself harmful; whatever effect it may have is due wholly to the inheritance received.'¹

Exogamy or outbreeding, then, cannot be safely

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 177.

accounted for by an instinct against inbreeding. But, on the other hand, it represents a very strong tendency in life, which, becoming conscious in man, gives rise to many repugnances and inhibitory customs. Cross-fertilization, which is outbreeding in plant life, plays an immense part in the vegetable kingdom. And it is found that crossing of strains both in animal and plant life carries with it a biological advantage, has distinct survival value. Darwin thought that there was abundant evidence that such crossing 'gives vigour and fertility to the offspring'. Prof. Thomson is of the same opinion and adds that 'it promotes variability. The hybrid offspring may be a new thing and its offspring may be new. Sometimes the crossing seems to start "an epidemic of variations".'¹ This advantage in outbreeding in respect of variability is traceable, as it were at the upper waters of the stream of life, in the origin of sex itself. The authors of *Taboo and Genetics* point out that sexual reproduction had the advantage over asexual that it made possible a crossing of strains, which in their view accounts for the amazing development of 'the groups in which the reproductive process became thus partitioned between two kinds of individuals, male and female'.²

Without claiming to present a theory of Exogamy, we may now endeavour to arrange the facts inductively in that direction. We begin with the universal tendency in Evolution to advance from integration to integration, from simpler to more complex, by means of differentiations. The first great differentiation in the realm of life is that of Sex, whose value for the process apparently lies in the vast range of Variability to which it gives access. This crossing of individuals in sex in simpler forms of life passes into Cross-fertilization in plants, which, though not universal, continues the same biological advantage of promoting variability.

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 178.

² *Taboo and Genetics* (1921), pp. 7-8.

The crossing of strains brings an access of vigour to the new individuals. These advantages of outbreeding are continued in animals and man. In them the primeval urge of differentiation towards richer integrations is present; and the advantage of variability, together with the greater vigour of crossed or exogamous strains, becomes organized into a tendency which is almost an instinctive preference for outbreeding.

In man all instincts, fulfilled at first as in the lower animals by unconscious reflexes, tend to become objects of intelligence: their aims are more and more consciously pursued. With him, accordingly, psychological factors enter into the sex relation we are considering. Of these the most important is the attraction of the unfamiliar and strange. This is manifestly a form of differentiation in the direction of new integrations. Another element must here be noted. It is that, with the advent of consciousness in animals and man, there is frequently attached a certain pleasure or satisfaction to bodily, nervous, and mental integrations. Assimilation of food, capture of prey, and expression of sex, are examples of this in bodily integrations, while unifications of the mind or the formation of wholes in thought, such as the assimilation of new and interesting facts, the emergence of a fresh idea or discovery, or the gratification of curiosity, is accompanied by a definite pleasure. This is plainly of value for the acquisition of knowledge (of the environment in particular), an important new condition of human survival. It is the impulse of Curiosity with which we are specially concerned at the moment. Both in animals and man it drives the mind towards the mental acquisition of the unfamiliar and strange, thus forming in the mind new and more differentiated integrations, which bring with them the pleasure to which we have referred.

This attraction of the unfamiliar is clearly operative in sexual selection. The biological advantage of certain variations such as striking plumage, peculiar crests, the Australian Bower Bird's elaborately decorated structure, the Secretary Bird's mating dances, and the like, probably lay initially in attracting the attention of the opposite sex, appealing to its curiosity and interest in the unfamiliar, which are strengthened by the pleasure which accompanies a new integration in the mind. In the case of human beings, Dr. Westermarck has pointed out that one of the roots of Exogamy may well be the lack of interest in the females who are near and familiar, and conversely, the greater interest and attraction of the distant and strange. He quotes a remark of a Berber to himself, when he asked if marriages of cousins were common among his people: 'How can a man love a woman with whom he has grown up since childhood?'¹ The attraction consists in the psychological appeal of the strange and unfamiliar in circumstances in which Fear could have little or no influence, but in which the tendency towards variation, the primal impulse in Nature of differentiation and integration, takes the form of the demand upon attention and curiosity, the satisfaction of which carries with it an accompaniment of pleasure. These various elements, which yet are but expressions of the supreme tendency in Evolution, taking the form, on the one hand, of the preference for a crossing of strains, and, on the other, of the charm of the distant and unfamiliar, both of which embody the movement toward variability, go some way towards accounting for the widespread objection in primitive man to the marriage of near kin, which is almost an instinctive repugnance and gives rise to the numerous and varied customs of Exogamy.

We are employing Exogamy as an example of the

¹ *Marriage Ceremonies in Morocco*, p. 55.

growth of a Custom from a tendency within the Integration of Instinct through the reflection of crude intelligence upon it. It is hardly justifiable on the evidence to call the preference for outbreeding an instinct. It is, however, an almost instinctive repugnance or objection, so strong that it is embodied in stringent customs and laws, both for savage and civilized man, directed against what the latter calls 'incest'. The repugnance is there in savage man. The tendency has become conscious, and instead of obeying the impulse blindly he reflects upon it and wonders why. The first answer on the point is that which Fear, that all-pervading influence in primitive life and thought, prescribes, namely, that it is 'dangerous'. Calamity of one sort or another will follow to the individual, and what is more important, to the tribe. Savages, indeed, of somewhat high intelligence, make the same deduction from observation that civilized men have done—that inbreeding is undesirable, because the offspring tend to be sterile or otherwise defective. The Sema Naga of Assam 'recognizes the evils of consanguineous marriage . . . and he describes it as sterile or resulting in idiocy or deformity of its offspring, and it is also clear that he considers exogamy a sufficiently effective bar'.¹ The observation on which this theory is founded is of doubtful accuracy, since there is no satisfactory proof that inbreeding produces idiocy or deformity, if these undesirable characters are not already in the heredity. It is, however, an inference with which men of Science have been satisfied, and it may be pardoned in the intelligent savage.

On the other hand, the inference is not only doubtful in itself, but it is probably too logical, the observation too intellectual, for the more primitive types such as the Australian natives to be able to make it. It is too elaborate to be taken, as Dr. Westermarck does, as the

¹ *The Sema Nagas*, J. H. Hutton (Macmillan), 1921, p. 134.

origin of exogamous practices in such tribes. The most that can be said is that primitive man is conscious of a preference for marrying outside of his own family and near relations, the preference whose roots we have endeavoured to trace. He asks himself and his neighbour or is asked, in those interchanges of tentative thought which build up the group-consciousness and its 'collective representations', the why of this preference. The first and most natural answer is that not to observe the objection to marriage of kin would be disastrous to the man and to the tribe. To avert the danger, the utmost ingenuity of the tribe, particularly that of their specialists, the Medicine Men, is concentrated upon the adjustment of these relations. And when, as in the case of the Australian aborigines, Exogamy is one of their chief interests in a life in which interests are few, the concentration of thought upon it results in a maze of exogamous rules, which has all the simple complexity which children often introduce into their games, easily comprehensible to the initiate but mysterious to the outside spectator.

The meaning of kinship, which is crucial for Exogamy, is interpreted by the crude intellect of primitive man in many ways which are strange to the civilized mind. His groping thought frequently infers connexions which are not in the facts, and misses others which are real. A further complication is introduced by Totemism. The totem being 'all-one-flesh' with all the members of the clan creates a new and more sacred idea of kinship. And, as the 'sacred' is at first that which is invested with dangerous power, marriage within that kin is the object of deeper aversion than incestuous relations in the ordinary sense, and is the subject of more stringent prohibitions. These are the more carefully elaborated and enforced, in that the whole group, through its mystic unity with the totem, is involved in the peril and disaster of breaking them.

In these examples of Totemism and Exogamy, we have been observing a portion of the path of primitive man, from the instinctive stage of animal development up towards the integrations of intelligence, and particularly to his consciously created customs and laws. The Quest for Unity which drives him on in these progressive endeavours to unify his mind and his life, is the urge in him of evolving Nature as a whole, which takes form, first in the integrations of the inorganic world, then in the instinctive unifications of organic life, and finally in the structures of man's conscious intelligence. He thus achieves first the primitive unifications and order, tentative and fumbling enough, of such crude theories, beliefs, and laws of the group as those of Totemism, Exogamy, and Taboo, which reflection substitutes for the surer but narrower co-ordinations of Instinct; and thence he advances to the higher unifications of Knowledge, Morality, and Religion. This view of primitive man shows him as like some of Rodin's sculptures of Creation, half-emerging from but still half-held by the primal clay. Intelligence is still near to Instinct and partakes of its sudden impulsive character. Moreover, the subjects of his reflection are naturally the instincts themselves, the feelings and needs he must now reason about and explain; and it is out of the theories primitive man forms, his surmises, inferences, and practical measures taken to avert the dangers of the unseen power, and later, Powers, he dimly fears and guesses to be all around him, that the new Integration of Custom is created.

VII

THE GENERALIZED MIND

(a) IDEAS AND MENTAL GRASP

THE Integration of Custom is that stage of primitive culture at which most savage peoples are found at the present day. It is associated everywhere with tribal organization. The Custom, which is law, science, and religion for the members, is the custom of the tribe. This unification of man's life has great stability, restoring on the higher plane of crude intelligence the adaptation to the environment which made for survival at the instinctive stage. The customs are so implicitly obeyed that they might be called the instincts of the tribe. It is man at this point of his development who is the subject of our inquiry; and we are seeking the psychological roots and early forms of that thought of his which assumes a certain definiteness and complexity in tribal custom. We thus return, in this and following chapters, to the examination in more detail of the primitive mind, of which we have taken a somewhat general view in order to trace its tendency to unification, which is so fundamental. When thus observed emerging from the integrations of animal instinct, the mind has that character of 'indefinite, incoherent homogeneity', which is the earliest stage of every developing thing, including the universe itself. To put it in terms of Zoology, it is 'generalized' mind.

A generalized animal is one usually of primitive form, which possesses qualities common to various allied genera, but lacks those specific characters which have been acquired in the course of evolution, by the species and varieties descended from it. For example, the earliest known ancestor of the horse shares the

toed foot with innumerable kinds of quadruped, while it lacks the specific hoof of the horse of history, and the multitude of special characters which belong to the many varieties evolved or bred in recent times, from the Shetland pony to the Clydesdale horse. The Lemur, which in its primitive types is the ancestor of the monkeys, is such a generalized animal. In certain general characters it covers, or sprawls loosely over, a wide area of life. It belongs to the quadrupeds, and yet its feet tend towards the simian hands; and its facial characteristics show it moving away from the long-muzzled animals toward the apes, and acquiring a more and more humanlike face. Some species of lemur have developed a single long finger, very useful for digging grubs from the bark of trees, as though this creature, instead of taking the straight road of evolution toward the human hand, had diverged into this by-path of variation and acquired something like a human finger. Thus the generalized ancestor of the present lemurs, of the apes and of man, had certain simple characters common to all three, but it lacked the specialized features which distinguish the anthropoid apes from the lemurs, and Man, on his side, from the apes. It had not, for instance, the human hand or weight of brain or erect position in walking.

Pithecanthropus erectus, the ape-man whose type is that of the remains found by Dr. Dubois in Java, might be called a generalized man. By means of common qualities, this type of creature covers in great part both the simian and the human tribes. Its three teeth as discovered are definitely human, and so also is the femur, denoting the erect posture in walking; but the skull is ape-like in shape and subhuman in size. Unlike the anthropoid apes, it had its speech-centres well developed; but it was no doubt without the smooth skin and the much larger and more convoluted brain of recent man.

In like manner, to apply the figure, primitive man possesses a generalized mind. He stands somewhere between the animals and cultivated man. In certain general characters the primitive mind covers both. It has the instincts of both ; and it has the intelligence, more rudimentary in the animal than its own, more highly developed in civilized man, which they have in common. But the brain of primitive man is of a generalized type ; as noted earlier, it is, for instance, undeveloped in the frontal region ; and so his mind is ill-furnished with those co-ordinative centres and functions which play so great a part in well-developed thought. An illustrative parallel has already been touched upon, between the evolution of the human hand and the growth of the co-ordinating power of the mind, between physical and mental grasp. The hand of the monkey without the opposable thumb, is very much a purely prehensile organ—a little more varied and effective than the prehensile tail—an organ for hanging on to things, just as the hand of the very young infant is. The hand of early man with the thumb in the human position, is comprehensive ; it has real grasp. It takes hold of the stick all round, and can use it as a weapon. It grips the stone and can chip another stone with it into a sharp-edged tool. Thus arrives Man, the employer of tools and the fire-maker, After the hand has reached this point, the countless sorts and qualities of grasp, from the hand on the rein or the plough, to the hand of Raphael or the fingers of Paganini, are already on the way.

The function of the mind which corresponds to the hand in this metaphor of 'grasp', is the apprehending, and later, the comprehending activity of thought. In percepts and perception thought is almost purely prehensile ; it hangs on to things, or with the finger-grip of the ape on its branch, it hangs on to one thing just long enough to swing it on to another ; and that

is characteristic of the animal mind, and only a little less of the mind of primitive man. In concepts and conception, on the other hand, the mind grasps a thing all round, comprehends it, separates it from other things, individualizes it by its peculiar qualities, or classifies it with other things of the same kind. The mind thus acquires two forms of concept: first, the distinctly individualized thing, with all its distinctive qualities comprehended in the idea of it; and second, the general idea, under which is grouped a whole class of things.

This power of forming concepts is the hand (with the opposable thumb) of the mind. It is present but very rudimentary in animals; it is still rudimentary in the most primitive men; but the power to individualize objects, to get a comprehensive grasp of them, on the one hand, and the power to form general ideas, grasping many things under one class-name, on the other, make man the mental-tool-using animal. That is, they provide him, in concepts, with those mental tools and the increasing ability to employ them, which lead him on from the tribal magician to Socrates and St. Paul and Charles Darwin. On the other hand—and this is very important for our later consideration of primitive religion—it is the deficiency in savage men of this power of forming concepts, and the vagueness and wavering character of them when formed, which account in great measure for the crude and strange shapes of man's early and savage religions.

We shall consider the formation of the Concept more fully in later chapters;¹ but in considering the character of generalized mind, we may illustrate the growth of a concept or general idea in such a mind, from Mr. Kipling's *Jungle Book* and from 'Mowgli's' idea of fire.² To the animals (in the book but also in reality) fire is in the great dim class of things-to-be-

¹ See Chapters XI and XII.

² *The Jungle Book*, Ch. I.

feared. It is a percept, a thing seen, perhaps felt, fled from, but not a concept, in no definite sense grasped by the mind. They call it, indeed, the Red Flower, which is an elementary attempt to classify it under the general idea of 'flower'; but it eludes that concept, as an incomprehensible flower which hurts when touched and moves like a living thing. Mowgli, however, goes down to the village to get some with which to fight Shere Khan the tiger. He finds out some things about fire by experience, that it can be carried in a clay pot, that it eats dry branches, that he can use such a branch, burning, to terrify the tiger and the recreant wolves. Thus may be observed how increasingly definite the concept fire becomes to the human brain of the animal-reared Mowgli, and how, as the concept does so become definite, both the thing and the idea grow to be more and more serviceable tools in the thought and practice of the young savage. Here Mr. Kipling's imagination—as is the way with poetic genius—serves the same purpose as the induction of the scientific observer, for it is likely that this may be the true history of primitive man's relation to fire, from the percept of it in his brute stage as a thing of terror, to the concept of it as something that could be grasped, kindled, and mastered. And that crude power over it which made the savage master of the jungle, is the lineal ancestor of the mastery of modern man over the jungle of industry, with its stranger monsters of the blast-furnace and the factory.

The concept of spirit, to be considered more fully later, has a very similar history. In the generalized mind of early man, or of the precursor of man, it is not there as a concept at all. It is hardly even a percept at first. The formless protoplasmic germ, so to say, of spirit floats about on the great sea of things-to-be-feared. The first distinction is between things-to-be-feared which are seen, known, and familiar, such as the

animal or human enemy, on the one hand, and, on the other, things-to-be-feared which are unseen, indefinite, unfamiliar, such as the things vaguely behind the strange, unidentifiable shape or sound, or unexpected occurrence. Then, probably with man's dim but growing sense of himself as *doing* things when he began to use tools, came the rudiments of the idea of power, of unseen entities which *did* things, and to which he referred the inexplicable things-to-be-feared. Anthropologists employ the Melanesian word Mana for savage man's idea of power or mysterious agency, because 'power', for civilized minds, is a definite concept of which the generalized mind of the savage is incapable. A little more definiteness comes when Mana is regarded as resident in particular things, as in a curious stick or unusual stone; and with this definiteness in mental grasp arrives the idea of mastery over the thing in which the power is, so that the man can use it to attain desirable ends—which, it is evident, is the beginning of Fetichism and Magic.

It is not necessary at this point to trace further the gradual emergence of the idea of soul or spirit under the influence of dreams in which dead relatives appear and of man's growing conception of himself as a separate being. As M. Lévy-Bruhl says :

'Between the exact conception of spirits which take the form of actual demons or gods, of which each has his name, his attributes, and often his worship, and the idea, at once general and concrete, of a power immanent in objects and beings, such as Mana, although that power is not individualized, there is room for an infinite number of intermediate forms, some more definite, others more elusive, vaguer, less hard in outline, though not less real for a mentality which is but little conceptual in character.' ¹

The growth of the idea of spirit thus illustrates the generalized character of the primitive mind, in the particular point of its difficulty in forming concepts.

¹ *La Mentalité primitive* (Alcan, Paris), p. 55.

VIII

THE GENERALIZED MIND

(b) FATIGUE OR WEARINESS OF EFFORT

A FURTHER characteristic of the generalized primitive mind, which has important consequences for religion, may be called Fatigue, or the difficulty of sustained mental effort. As the early mind of man is deficient in grasp, in the power to grip various objects into the coherent whole of a general idea, so it is lacking in the capacity for continuous endeavour along a particular line, to hold, for instance, to one train of thought, and to join the memories or ideas of the past with the facts of the present and the possibilities of the future. Coleridge noted, from the evidence of missionaries in India as to the lower types of native mind, 'the rapid exhaustion of their whole power of attention, and with what distressful effort it is exerted while it lasts'.¹ M. Lévy-Bruhl remarks that 'primitives . . . dispense with thought as often as they possibly can' and that 'the simplest reflection is intolerable fatigue'.² M. De La Saussaye says of savages: 'They follow impulses and impressions which change every moment.'³

This impulsiveness or changeableness in thought is one consequence of the difficulty of continuous mental effort. If one may go to the *Jungle Book* again for illustration, this is the character the other animals give to the Bandar-Log or Monkey People. 'They never go far,' said Rann the Kite, using his own bird language. 'They never do what they set out to do. Always pecking at new things are the Bandar-Log.'⁴ This restlessness of the mind which in Kipling's fancy

¹ *Aids to Reflection* (John Grant, Edinburgh), p. 10.

² *La Mentalité primitive*, p. 49.

³ *Manual of the Science of Religion*, p. 35.

⁴ *The Jungle Book*, p. 57.

provoked the contempt of the other animals, was in one sense the pledge of the greater inheritance of these primates to which man belongs. The other creatures moved placidly in the grooves of instinct; but the animal which became human was thrust by its new power of intelligence, into a forest of ideas among which it had to make its own paths. Intelligence was driven by its fundamental restlessness (that universal urge in evolution taking the form in man of the divine discontent which we have named the Quest for Unity) from one idea to another, seeking always some way of advance; but all the time it was hampered by its own defect. This defect of intelligence was its undeveloped power, and therefore its inability, to make a sustained mental effort, to pursue, for example, one line of thought long enough to arrive at some large and comprehensive, broad and yet deep conception.

The primitive intelligence is thus easily tired, like a child learning to walk, and falls back upon various ways of escaping the fatigue, various forms of rest for the mind. One of these is simply this tendency to change of thought, to variety of idea, to pass easily from one notion to another. Another is to put an act in place of a thought, to cut the Gordian knot instead of solving the riddle of it, to *do* something—ritual, magical, and the like—instead of thinking. A third form of rest, which is very much a development of the preceding, is to do the same thing over and over again, in other words, Custom, which, moreover, is always tending to throw the mind back, from the more difficult operations of intelligence to the easier working of instinct. With such inclinations to rest, arising from the early mind's incapacity for a long strain of thought, the deep urge of the nobler restlessness, the essential movement to unification of life, continually strives, breaking out from them in the forms and along the paths of advancing culture.

This tendency to relax from the effort of thought to some resting-place for the mind nearer to the level of instinct, may be illustrated by a stage in man's physical development. The erect position of the body, which means so much for the growth of the brain and thus of the mind, is only attained in evolution slowly and, so to say, with difficulty. The stages, from the lemur-like quadruped to *Pithecanthropus erectus* and the European Apollo or athlete, might easily be traced. The gorilla, for example, supports the erect posture by resting on the knuckles of the hand against the ground. The orang-utan may grasp a branch overhead as he stands, or walk with his arms balancing above his head. When the upright position was new to the precursor of man, the necessity for frequent rests from it would be greatly felt. And it is a familiar fact that when civilized man is weak, from childhood, from age, from illness, it is the erect posture which fails : when he is tired, the muscles which keep him upright are the first to complain ; and when he rests, it is sitting or lying down.

The capacity for continued mental effort resembles in such respects the erect posture of the body, which is its physical basis in the evolutionary process. We on our part are wont to speak of an effort of memory, an effort of imagination, an effort to pursue a thought, all of which imply a certain straining of the mind, from which not to think or to think little is a relaxation and a rest. The late W. H. Hudson, that accurate observer of nature and of himself, describes the strange peace and elation which he found in riding out into the vast plains of Patagonia, day after day, and simply gazing on its desolate expanse.

‘ During those solitary days ’, he says, ‘ it was a rare thing for a thought to cross my mind ; animal forms did not cross my vision or bird-voices assail my hearing more rarely. In that novel state of mind I was in, thought had become impossible . . .

my mind had suddenly transformed itself from a thinking machine into a machine for some other unknown purpose. To think was like setting in motion a noisy engine in my brain ; and there was something there which bade me be still, and I was forced to obey. My state was one of *suspense* and *watchfulness*.'

This condition, he adds, 'seemed familiar rather than strange', and was 'accompanied by a strong feeling of elation'.¹

Hudson's explanation of this state of mind, which is probably a just one, is that 'such changes in us can only be attributed to an instantaneous reversion to the primitive and wholly savage mental conditions'.¹ One notes particularly, however, that in this primitive state of mind, part of the satisfaction lay in the cessation of thought involving mental effort, and in the return to the suspense and watchfulness of the animal or the savage in the Wild. That condition of suspense and watchfulness is quite different from the strain of thinking : it is simply the keen awareness of the animal senses to the external world at the instinctive stage of development, which, on the emergence of any new sight or sound, would release the trigger of some movement or other instinctive response. The elation, in part, and certainly the restfulness of this mental state, as felt by Mr. Hudson, were due to the relaxation of the effort of thought which is often felt as a strain even by civilized men. In the primitive mind the effort is far more difficult, the strain is more pronounced, and thence the inclination to rest, to relax from thought altogether or to seek some kind of support for it, is much more influential. But in order to make progress at all in thinking, it is necessary to be able to recall the course of past thought, to visualize at least a little way ahead, its course in the future, and by a certain concentration to 'hold the line' between. This is hard for the uncultured mentality which does

¹ *Idle Days in Patagonia* (J. M. Dent), pp. 211-12.

not easily hold ideas in memory or see whither they lead, and finds it difficult to concentrate upon or pursue a train of thought. In such endeavours the brain of primitive man is soon tired : it sinks down from mental erectness, and seeks and finds various ways of resting. We shall now examine a few of these.

1. The first is the swift response, resembling the reflexes of instinct, of primitive man to impulse and sense impression, whence the quick passage from one object of interest to another. In the jungle, it has been said, the law is, 'Strike first and ask questions afterwards'; it might be put as, 'Leap aside first, or run like the wind from the strange sight or sound, and then stop and think about it—if you have time, that is, and some other danger does not send you flying again.' Everything around early man, unable to depend upon strength or speed, seemed dangerous, especially to his awakened Imagination, his new human power of visualizing phenomena within his mind. Hidden power to hurt was in everything he did not understand; and the impulse of flight was generally stronger than the inclination to dwell on things, to reflect upon them. Hence that disconnectedness in thought which, for want of a better word, we shall call *atomism*.

This we have already seen in the inability of the savage to form distinct concepts or general ideas : it appears further in the tendency to leap impulsively from one object of interest or fear to another, without dwelling long enough upon one in particular to form any definite conception or habit of thought about it. This type of mind is admirably represented in the following account of the intellectually low tribes, the Junglemen, of Chota-Nagpur.

'The indefinite something which they fear and attempt to propitiate is not a person. The idea which lies at the root of their religion is that of power or rather of many powers, the

shifting and shadowy company of unknown powers or influences making for evil rather than for good, which resides in the primeval forest, in the crumbling hills, in the rushing river, in the spreading tree; which gives its spring to the tiger, its venom to the snake, which generates jungle fever, and walks abroad in the terrible guise of cholera, small-pox, or murrain. Closer than this he does not define the object to which he offers his victim, or whose symbol he daubs with red at the appointed season. Some sort of power is there and that is enough for him.¹

Here is what we regard as the most generalized and elementary form from which man's religion has developed. It illustrates also the atomism, the atomic, disconnected or impulsive character of the thought of primitive man, leaping from one object of his fear or awe to another, without pausing reflectively upon any.

The opportunity and with it the power so to dwell and reflect upon things, must have come with some deliverance from fear, some safety which enabled the primitive human being, having taken to the ground and the erect posture with all their perils, to pause and consider his world, or rather, some (to him mysterious) things in it. Such safety and opportunity might come with cave-dwelling, or with the invention of comparatively effective flint weapons, or with the use of fire, or with all of these. It is tempting for its picturesqueness, though it is mere conjecture, to imagine that fire enabled man to sit down, protected by its red and smoky veil from his brute enemies, and, in his dim reveries, see within his mind at last more and more distinct shapes of ideas and less fleeting impressions of his world. In his still thoughts beside his camp-fire, would grow especially that increasingly clear vision of himself which does so much to unify both his inward and outward life. The history, indeed, of progress in early human thought, is in some degree the history of

¹ Quoted from Risley in *Census for India*, 1901, Part I, pp. 352 f., by Prof. Hopkins, *The History of Religions*, p. 18.

the safety of man's life, and of the consequent leisure and opportunity for reflection, which developed in power with the opportunity.

For a long time, however, in the evolution of the race, sustained mental effort would be fatiguing, as it is with existing backward peoples and even with backward sections among the highly civilized ; the pursuit of an elusive general idea or of a linked chain of cause and effect, would quickly tire the primitive brain ; and rest would be found in relapse into the earlier and easier atomism of thought, flitting lightly like a winged insect from one object to another. These opposite tendencies may both be seen at work in Fetichism. There, on the one hand, a certain association of ideas, or more probably a vague mental connexion between a tangible object and mysterious power in that object, acquires a degree of permanence, and makes it into a fetich ; but, on the other hand, the permanence of the association is limited and easily broken down in the impulsive and disconnected mentality of the savage, so that the object, having disappointed its possessor in some way, may be thrown aside, cease to be a fetich, and be supplanted by some other focus of reverence.

2. Another form of rest from Fatigue in the savage mind, is Custom. This is the reverse of that kind of relief which has just been discussed. Instead of moving lightly from one object of interest or awe to another, the creature of impulse, primitive man contents himself with doing the same thing over and over again, becoming thus the creature of custom. To act is for man easier than to think, because genetically and in the course of evolution action was prior to thought. 'Animal thought', says Dr. Varendonck, 'seems inseparable from movement';¹ and this is doubtless the meaning of Ribot when he says that 'every idea is a movement which is just commencing'. At the

¹ *Evolution of the Conscious Faculties*, p. 155.

instinctive stage of his development, before thought could be said to exist, man's animal ancestor would live by and for action and movement under the impulse of his instinctive reflexes. Accordingly, since it is easier to slip downward on the slope of evolution than to strive upward, man finds rest from the fatigue of mental effort, in muscular movements of his animal body and in doing things which call for the minimum of thought. It is in this sense that games and sports are relaxations. Here also is much of the charm of ritual and magic. Man solves his problems, which primitively are mainly practical, by doing and saying things instead of thinking about them.

This preference for action over thought, of the outward for the inward, is reinforced when it is action not of the isolated individual but of the mass, the clan or tribe. The consciousness of community, arising from the social instincts, gives a deepened feeling of safety and well-being, a heightened sense of power and a warmer exhilaration, to the great communal actions of tribal magic and religion. In the corroboree, for instance, there is expression, in outward forms, of kinship-feeling, sex-feeling, and even of artistic impulses; for in Australia tunes were sometimes exchanged at these intertribal gatherings and thus spread over the continent.¹ In the Ordeal there is a simple, and, to the savage mind, extraordinarily effective action, which obviates the weighing of evidence, an impossible task to such a mind.² Imitative Magic is a practical method of increasing the supply of grubs or kangaroos, and adding the pleasure of drama and play,³ without the hard thinking which invents better weapons and ways of hunting. The various ceremonial actions by which man seeks unification with his world and within him-

¹ *Tom Petrie's Reminiscences of Early Queensland*, p. 19.

² Cf. Lévy-Bruhl, *La Mentalité primitive*, p. 247.

³ Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 195.

self through unity with his god, as in the rituals of Totemism and Sacrifice, secure that unification upon their lower plane so successfully that, not only for savage man but even for many civilized people, the higher unification, through searching of heart, thoughtfulness of mind, and spirituality of character, is often unsought and unattained.

The strength of Custom, the custom of the tribe, lies thus in its adaptation to a stage of mental development in which the effort of action is preferred to the more exacting effort of thought, especially if co-ordinative and prolonged. Its powerful appeal consists in its evasion, by practical solutions of life's problems, of the strain which reflection imposes upon the ill-developed co-ordinative powers of the savage brain. The result is the formation of a system of belief and practice, which so dominates a great portion of mankind in all ages down to the present, and is, in its own way, so deeply unified, that it deserves to be called the Integration of Custom. Its advantages to the evolution of human society will be mentioned later. Its supreme disadvantage is that the mental effort to break through tribal traditions and age-long practices, is as difficult as for the individual to conquer ingrained personal habits, and indeed much more so ; for the collective consciousness in the primitive state, and even beyond it, with the social instincts in the heart of it, like the iron in reinforced concrete, is extremely resistant to alteration. The tendency to rest in what has proved safe, is stronger by far than the adventurous impulse to launch out upon the new and the unknown. This accounts for the innumerable culs-de-sac in the history of the race, the stagnation in which so many tribes remain for long periods. Self-preservation seems all on the side of inertia. The contrary force in Nature, however, that of variability, is not to be defeated. The inveterate tendency to

differentiation on the way to higher unifications breaks up the integration of custom at last ; and the tribal habit of resting in customary ways is overcome by the restlessness of the human spirit which is the impulse and impetus of progress. How these changes are accomplished, by which certain tribes of men move out from the savage stage of custom towards nationhood and civilization, is also to be touched upon later. At the moment this integration of custom, man's next and prolonged resting-place after the integration of instinct, is an illustration of the difficulty of maintaining the erect posture of the mind, and of the tendency to relapse to various forms of rest from mental strain or Fatigue, which are characteristic of primitive man.

3. One more example of the part played by Fatigue in the primitive mind, is the place of Authority in early religion. Custom, as just said, is the supreme authority for savage man, embracing the authority of both tradition and the tribe. Primitive man is a Pragmatist. Life is too difficult and dangerous for him not to trust to what has 'worked', what has been safe for his ancestors. There are two elements in the religious conservatism of primitive man, in which one may see reflected, oddly and yet with some faithfulness as in an ancient mirror, the same conservatism of recent times. The one is the fear which is the soul of Taboo, and moves man to let well alone—the fear which sees in all religion and religious objects a perilous force resembling a powerful modern explosive, which the average man dare not handle, and which only highly trained hands may touch, and these with the most extraordinary precautions. The other element is this factor of Fatigue, the difficulty the early type of mind has first in grasping and then holding new ideas or variants of thought and practice, which call for mental effort. The existing ideas and customs are those of

the group, and the fear is also the fear felt by the group as a whole, exposed as it is to the dangerous power which a careless or contumacious hand may let loose upon it ; and it is into the tribal or group mind that any new departure must penetrate, to become a *représentation collective*—in M. Lévy-Bruhl's phrase, a collective idea. Hence it is that originality or genius in those individuals who doubtless appear from time to time, has probably little effect upon the tribal life ; and the tribal integration, the integration of custom, is broken up, not as a rule by the power of great individuals, lawgivers, prophets, and kings, such as emerge at a later stage, but by movements and developments of the tribe itself, by its own growth under favourable conditions to great proportions, by migrations, impact of higher civilizations, and the like.¹

The tribal integration thus resists the onset of originality or individual genius within the tribe almost as the iron cliff flings back the exceptional wave ; and hence it is that savage or primitive races remain, for so many ages and in so many parts of the world, stagnant, at the same cultural stage. It is in groups, which from other causes are incipient nations, at the pastoral or agricultural or even town-dwelling level of culture, that great dim figures, half-legendary, but representing the power of original genius at last to influence the lives of masses of men, appear in the mists of early history, like Abraham, Moses, Solon, Lycurgus, founders of religions, law-givers and makers of nations. At earlier stages of human development, the tribal solidarity and the inertia of custom are so strong that the savage mind, to which mental concentration and the formulation of a comprehensive idea involve a strain, falls back all but invariably upon the authority of custom and the tribe.

An old chief of New Guinea, asked why at a burial

¹ See Ch. XXIV.

they painted and decorated the corpse, replied: 'Thy question is a hard one for me to answer. We do these things because it is our custom. It is what our forefathers did with their dead, and we do it. I know no more than that.'¹ There is nothing unfamiliar to our age in this attitude of mind. Many things in modern life are maintained for no other reason than that of unreasoned custom. The duel, that survival of the Ordeal, has been upheld in very recent times in Germany and France by reasons which could only be convincing to a savage; and Maeterlinck's essay in war-time on the duel, is an example of that primitive mentality into which the civilized mind was brought, through the stirring of ancestral depths by the Great War. In the 'religions of authority' as contrasted by Auguste Sabatier with the 'religion of the spirit', there are the most striking examples in civilized society of what we have named Fatigue.² It is a falling back upon a more primitive state of mind, that of submission to authority, from the exercise of the higher and more recently acquired capacities of the mind, and from the mental effort and emotional strain demanded by that exercise. The attraction of Roman Catholicism for minds influenced by the fear of change, and fatigued by the problems presented by Science and Biblical Criticism, is the primitive one of providing in the authority of the Church the rest from thought, which is the normal condition of primitive mind. It is not surprising that the ways of maintenance and transmission of that authority should remind the anthropologist in many respects of the magical notions and practices of primitive man, and that, in Roman Catholic countries especially, the peasant, who, according to Dr. R. R. Marett, is, in his

¹ *Savage Life in New Guinea*, Charles W. Abel, p. 95.

² *The Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit* (Williams and Norgate).

folk-lore, midway between the cave-man and the cultured modern, retains many superstitions in common with the savage.

In Protestantism, the extreme emphasis upon the authority of Scripture has incurred a similar nemesis. Dr. Martineau has vividly described this attitude. 'The blind idolater of "Holy Writ" will have it all infallible, that it may spare him the cares of thought and conscience, and serve him as *sortes vaticinae* for the solution of every question, and the relief of every scruple.'¹ The result of this return upon the primitive, arising from the ancient fear of and for the sacred, and from the enticement of relief from mental strain, is evident in the adherents of verbal inspiration, who make texts into magic spells, reduce prophets and apostles into medicine-men or mechanical oracles, and in their reverence for numbers and expectation of sudden apocalyptic events, recover the mental attitude of the childhood of the race. In both these reversions to authority, that of an infallible church or of an infallible book, a certain integration of the mind is attained—a unification of the kind which the mind is ever seeking, and in which it normally finds satisfaction and rest. But it is unification upon a low level—a level, indeed, not far above that integration of custom and tribal authority in which so many peoples have remained, and from which the human spirit has escaped with such enormous difficulty. To revert to it is to turn against the trend and urge of the evolutionary process in the universe in general, which proceeds from integration to higher integration by ever richer differentiations, and which has committed its highest unifications to the mind and spirit of man.

Besides the authority of the tribe and tribal custom in primitive life, there is the authority of the individual. The authoritative man in matters of religion and

¹ *Seat of Authority in Religion* (Longmans), p. 287.

custom, the medicine-man, the sorcerer, the priest, the priest-king, is a familiar figure in the comparative study of religions. His power depends upon that credulity which is a mark of the primitive mental type, not only in ancient or savage, but in modern and civilized times ; and credulity is a form of rest from mental effort. The medicine-man, the priest, and even the Pope himself, derive their authority from the mind of man fatigued with the effort to cope with ' perils of the soul ' and of the body, and glad to rest on the strong assertions and the confident promises of another. It is the fact, in respect not merely of primitive but of modern man, that the promise of deliverance from danger, or relief from pain or sorrow, creates a powerful prejudice in favour of belief, so that the weighing of evidence or close scrutiny of the facts is done, if at all, under grave disadvantages. There are phenomena in modern life, particularly in relation to the occult, which make it not difficult to comprehend the simple acceptance by savage man, of the most impossible statements of his authoritative sorcerer or priest. In his case there are psychological defects with which we shall deal more specifically in later chapters. In the meanwhile this inclination to fall back upon authority, whether of custom or of the strong personality, illustrates the tendency to rest from the erect posture of the mind, from that steady and independent mental effort, which is so hard for the generalized mind of early man, but which is as essential to human progress as the erect position of the body, and is so important for the development of individuality.

IX

THE THEORY OF M. LÉVY-BRUHL

A 'DIFFERENT' MENTALITY

(a) *REPRÉSENTATIONS COLLECTIVES*

IN treating of 'the generalized mind' we have taken up a position which some sociologists would not concede. It is that the mind of man at all points of its history is generically the same. The primitive mind and the civilized mind are earlier and later stages of the same developing thing. They are genetically connected; and cultured thought is a specific descendant, more highly differentiated and more deeply integrated, of a generalized and primitive type of thought. The mind of man is the subject of evolution as well as his body; and, as the brain, the organ of mind, can be traced through well-defined steps of development from that of the animal up to the brain of civilized man, so the evolution of mind, could it be traced, would be found to be substantially continuous from the animal and ape-like mind of the generalized sub-human type, through truly human primitive forms, onward to the most refined modern mentality. Within the integration of intelligence, the phenomena and laws of thought which characterize the finest cultivated minds, are found in rudimentary forms in the brain of the savage, and even, sketchily, in the mental processes of the higher animals. Hence, however different they may seem from each other, as the raw green blade from the golden head of corn, these earlier mental phenomena are regarded as elementary forms of the later, into which they have developed by a process of continuous evolution.

This is a position to which a certain school of thought is more or less definitely opposed. It is the French school of sociologists, led by M. Émile Durkheim and the contributors to *L'Année Sociologique*, of which he was editor, including, among the most distinguished, the collaborators, MM. Hubert and Mauss. We shall now devote some attention to the theories of M. Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, Professor of the Sorbonne, because his two brilliant works,¹ expounding mainly the doctrines of this school, present illuminating points of contrast with the theory here put forward. The salient point in the theory of this writer is the contention that primitive mentality is so different from that of civilized man as to constitute a different species of thought, and to make the ordinary laws of logic and psychology inapplicable to it. The following passage may be quoted as marking clearly his divergence from existing theories, and as containing in its final paragraph almost all the terms peculiar to his system of thought and to that of the French school.

‘The philosophers, the psychologists and logicians, instead of proceeding by the comparative method, have all assumed a common postulate. They have granted to themselves, as the starting-point of their investigations, a human mind (*esprit*) always and everywhere similar to itself, that is to say, a single type of thinking subject, obeying in its mental operations laws, psychological and logical, which are everywhere identical. The differences amongst institutions and beliefs must from this point of view be explained by the more or less puerile and incorrect use which is made of principles common to the different societies. . . . Now this postulate is incompatible with the facts revealed by the comparative study of the mentality of the diverse human societies. That study informs us that the mentality of the inferior societies is of a character essentially prelogical and mystical, that it has a different orientation from ours, that its collective representations are governed by the law of participation, and indifferent, consequently, to contradiction,

¹ *Les Fonctions mentales dans les sociétés inférieures*, 6th edition (Alcan, Paris, 1922); *La Mentalité primitive* (Alcan, Paris, 1922).

and united with each other by connexions and preconnexions which are disconcerting for our logic,'¹

In speaking of the 'philosophers, psychologists and logicians', M. Lévy-Bruhl has specially in mind what he designates as 'the English school' of anthropologists under the leadership of Sir E. B. Tylor and Sir James Frazer, to whose theories his own and those of his school are definitely opposed. That school, indeed, makes a good foil for the display of his own weapon; and his criticism of its main doctrine that Animism is absolutely primitive and universal, is up to a point as just as it is learned. But in neither of his volumes is there evidence that he is abreast of the younger school of English and American anthropologists, who, while giving to the earlier generalizations of Tylor, Spencer, and Frazer, only a limited application, have persisted in combining psychology with sociology in their studies of the primitive, not without positive and valuable results. Such men as Marett, McDougall, Rivers, Crooke, Lloyd Morgan, and L. T. Hobhouse rightly treat the mind of man as subject, like everything else in the universe, to evolution, and in looking into the mind of savage man for what is truly 'primitive', they are not surprised to find that the mentality which psychology analyses in civilized man, exists there in elementary forms.

It is on this point of a continuous evolution of Mind, that the theories of M. Lévy-Bruhl and his school are most vulnerable. They do not attempt, or rather definitely refuse to give a genetic account of primitive mentality as they understand it. While all other sciences find the idea of development not merely fruitful but indispensable in their studies of life, these writers almost entirely ignore it in their account of the mind of savage man. Preoccupied with a relatively advanced stage of human development, the stage of

¹ *Les Fonctions mentales*, p. 454.

tribal ideas and customs, they have left it like Melchizedek, 'without father, without mother, without pedigree'. M. Durkheim, for example, says that 'it is a vain enterprise to seek to infer the mental constitution of primitive man from that of the higher animals'. He refuses also to seek light upon man's early mental life, from the psychology of the child.¹ This is certainly opposed to the whole trend of modern psychology, which is so strongly directed to the study of the child mind, and, more or less in connexion with it, of the instincts and tendencies of the higher animals. M. Lévy-Bruhl, in repudiating the theories of the school of Tylor, seems to regard with equal scepticism their use of the category of development. Writing of Herbert Spencer's generalizations upon the hypothesis of Darwin, he says :

'Mr. Tylor and his disciples thought they found in them a guarantee for the continuity which they established in the development of the mental functions of man. This doctrine permitted them to present this development as an uninterrupted evolution, of which also one could mark the steps, from the animistic beliefs of the lowest societies right up to the conception of the system of the universe in the mind of a Newton.'²

This continuity of evolution he is careful to reject. The mental activity of the primitives must not be interpreted as a rudimentary form of our own.³ In explaining his description of the primitive mind as 'prelogical' (*prélogique*), the term by which, along with its complementary term 'mystical' (*mystique*), he chiefly characterizes the difference between primitive and modern mentality, he takes pains to observe that 'prelogical must not be taken to mean that this mentality constitutes a sort of anterior stage, in time, to the appearance of logical thought'. In calling it

¹ *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, pp. 67-8.

² *Les Fonctions mentales*, p. 18.

³ *La Mentalité primitive*, pp. 15-16.

'prelogical' he simply means 'that it does not feel constrained like our thought above all to avoid contradictions'.¹

Thus in defining the difference between primitive and modern mentality, M. Lévy-Bruhl and his school in general do not make, and even repudiate, the attempt to place the primitive in the line of a direct evolution toward the modern. It is true that this author may claim only to be describing the mental functions of man in his inferior societies, that is to say, in clans and tribes; but for him that is *primitive* mentality as investigated in his two volumes. It is also true that, as might be expected of such a fresh and able mind, he does not fail to apply fruitfully the comparative and evolutionary method, to the data of anthropology, where his special theory is not in question, as when he says, for instance, that between the representation, at once general and concrete, of a force immanent in objects and persons such as *mana*, on the one hand, and the idea of demons and gods, on the other, there is room for an infinite number of intermediate forms.² But, in general, so determined is he to isolate the mentality of man at the tribal stage, and to make it essentially different from 'ours' (a very ambiguous word), that he throws over comparative psychology altogether, and gives no account whatever—probably considering it impossible—of how that complex and mysterious mentality came to be. It is significant, moreover, that he gives no satisfactory description of the manner in which the mentality he is concerned with, passes into modern ways of thinking. He has made the severance so complete that the bridges he throws across the gulf are of the slenderest. Indeed he seems to despair of the possibility of such an account of the transformation or transition.³

¹ *Les Fonctions mentales*, p. 79.

² *La Mentalité primitive*, p. 56.

³ *Op. cit.*, p. 476.

The comparative study of the primitive mind, however, will not accept this *non possumus*. It will seek for a solution of its problems where other comparative sciences of life seek them, in principles which regard man as a developing being, whose mind as well as his body passes from more generalized and rudimentary forms to more specific and complex, by a continuous development whose chief stages and gradual transformations are recognizable. Among these principles we have found man's Quest for Unity, the tendency towards Unification, both of his inner and outer world, which holds together all the stages of his history, from the age in which he became human up to the present, as the string holds the beads of a necklace, or better, as the life of the growing thing is the permanent under and in and through all its changes. This urge in him, which yet is consistent with, and indeed necessary to, the noblest expressions of his freedom, sets man within the general movement of the universe by way of differentiations towards more and more subtly integrated, and, so to say, spiritual unities, like one of the 'seven seas' within the tidal movement of ocean as a whole.

The Integration of the Tribe, which is the supreme interest of the school of thought under notice, is a smaller unity within the larger Integration of Intelligence. Prior to the unification of his life under the customs and laws of the tribe, man passed through the Integration of Instinct, in which all animals but himself remained. The laws and customs of the tribe were initially the result of his rude, uncouth, impulsive reflection upon his instincts; and the very rigidity and all-pervasiveness of tribal custom, which have given to these sociologists the impression of a peculiar mentality in savage man, are properly a return, under the influence of tribal solidarity and authority, towards the integration of instinct, as the curve of a spiral

mountain railway turns almost to the same point on a slightly higher plane. Subsequent to the Integration of the Tribe, for those peoples whose life broke from its iron channel, there open the many and varied paths to the unifications of civilized and cultured, moral and religious life. The integrations of the modern mind, nevertheless, can only be understood, in their aberrations as in their lofty achievements, in their stagnations and culs-de-sac as well as in their impulse toward progress and refinement, by seeing them pass through the instinctive, and later, the tribal stage of human development—like a river which after a wide, shallow, brawling reach, has plunged into an immense, narrow, rock-walled, and often gloomy canyon—and emerge bearing with them elements, influences, and even prehistoric relics and fossils from both.

In refusing to regard the primitive mentality as an earlier and rudimentary stage of the civilized, M. Lévy-Bruhl does not succeed in establishing the very great difference, the almost absolute difference, between the two, which he claims. This may appear when we consider the terms he employs. Of these the first is collective representations (*représentations collectives*).

(a) These mental phenomena may be recognized, he says, by the following signs :

‘They are common to the members of a given social group ; they are transmitted from generation to generation ; they impose themselves upon individuals and awaken in them, according to circumstances, sentiments of respect, fear, adoration, &c., for their objects. They do not depend on the individual for existence.’¹

So far as we have been able to gather from M. Lévy-Bruhl’s exposition of this term, collective representations, we see no reason to give to this trait of the

¹ *Les Fonctions mentales*, p. 1.

savage mind any other meaning than that of tribal ideas, or the traditional conceptions held by the clan or group and transmitted to its members. It is granted that the ideas of savage man, even in somewhat advanced tribal groups, are at once less definite and more concrete than those habitual to civilized minds, and that his conceptions are nearer to images, upon which he impulsively feels and acts, than to the concepts which are the common tools of cultivated thought. It is also to be admitted that the salient characteristic of what we call the tribal integration, is the overwhelming authority of the group over its members, which makes obedience to tribal laws or taboos almost a second nature to the savage. But neither of these characteristics is peculiar to the 'collective representations' of the primitive mind; for concepts, as is noted later, are of all grades of definiteness or abstraction, from the 'image-concept' which M. Lévy-Bruhl rightly regards as the most primitive type, up to the most severely scientific conception; while submission to authority is, as just observed, a quality of 'generalized mind' which plays a great part still in civilized society. M. Lévy-Bruhl himself gives a striking example of the transition made by savages converted to Christianity, from the primitive idea of the authority of the tribe to the modern idea of the authority of God in the Church. He quotes from *Missions évangéliques* thus:

'Our Christian natives are very conservative: the custom which is a law accepted by all in the civil domain has become in the Church the law of God. To change anything is to go contrary to the will of God.'¹

This is surely a development from a primitive to a civilized idea, within one and the same mentality.

An interesting point is raised when our author holds

¹ *La Mentalité primitive*, pp. 475-6.

that, as one element of the unique mentality he ascribes to primitive people, in speaking of 'représentations collectives', a different shade of meaning must be given to 'representations', from that which it bears in the common usage of psychology. He maintains that while for us 'representation' is supremely an intellectual and cognitive phenomenon, for the primitive mind it is inextricably bound up with emotional and motor elements, derived from very particular events and ceremonies in the tribal life. It is an important point in his theory, that these collective representations are chiefly acquired on occasions of intense emotional excitement for the tribe and for the individual, particularly at the time of education for and initiation into manhood and into the secrets of the society, and at the similarly emotional, periodical mass celebrations of tribal, ritual, and religious actions. The result of these impressive comminglings of tribal ideas with profound emotions and thrilling ritual actions, is that

'when in the interval between these ceremonies the object of one of these representations shall rise into the consciousness of the primitive man, even if at that moment he is solitary and calm, that object will never appear to him in the form of a colourless and indifferent image. A wave of emotion will rise in him immediately, not so violent doubtless as during the ceremonies, but strong enough to make the cognitive phenomenon almost disappear beneath the feelings which envelop it.'¹

Our criticism of this theory of M. Lévy-Bruhl may be summed up in two points.

1. He has with perfect justice laid stress upon the emotional and motor elements accompanying the cognitive in all man's primitive thought. This is a genuinely primitive character of savage mentality. But he gives the impression that the powerful emotional element is derived almost wholly from the religious and magical ceremonies, and exciting collective ritual actions of the

¹ *Les Fonctions mentales*, pp. 29-30.

tribe. He has not noted that they do so only (as is the way with mass feeling and action) by return to, and revival of, more primitive states of mind, which in the last resort may be largely individual. Glancing back to those more primitive stages, one observes that at the instinctive level of the life of man or animal the cognitive element in the mental content is enveloped in feelings and impulses to action. The perception of anything that arouses its interest is for the most primitive type of mind to feel emotions like fear or desire, and tendencies to action in the way of flight or defence or approach. In the generalized mind, as we have described it, the perils of life make reflection hasty and impulsive; the effort of thought to co-ordinate phenomena is difficult, and the 'suggestible' mind turns easily to rest upon authority, or to relief in ritual action. At the same time differentiations of the social instincts and tendencies, such as the feeling of kinship, the sense of security in being with others, and the exhilaration of excited mass emotion touched with the awe of the 'sacred', combine with these other elements to form those customary beliefs and traditional ways of meeting life's problems which we, at least, are unable to distinguish from 'collective representations'. These 'représentations collectives', therefore, are not 'different' from the more elementary modes of thought which precede them, or from the concepts and reasonings of cultured thought, except as stages in the history of the same developing phenomenon differ from each other.

2. A second point of criticism with respect to collective representations is that they are given, by this author and his school, too wide a range of application to primitive mentality. M. Lévy-Bruhl conveys the impression that practically all the thought of primitive man is of this character, that all his conceptions, and even his perceptions, are collective

representations or tinged and permeated by them. It must be remarked that he gives few actual concrete examples of these 'représentations'; but let it be granted that the sight of a 'bull-roarer', or the appearance of his totem animal, will undoubtedly awaken in the savage the modes of thought, the emotions, the tendencies to ritual action, which were associated with them in those striking experiences in which the sacred and perilous, the powerful and mysterious, traditions and privileges of the tribe became his own. One cannot ignore, indeed, the resemblance of such a state of mind to the attitude of, say, a modern ritualist to the crucifix or the high altar, as compared with that of an evangelical, and the difficulty this puts in the way of supposing a 'different' mentality for the savage. Setting that aside, however, M. Lévy-Bruhl provides some interesting examples under the head of connexions among representations (*liaisons des représentations*), which are curiously lacking in that very collective character which he demands for all these representations. He quotes instances of Central African natives who connected a period of drought with a type of hat or with the long robes worn by the missionaries; others in New Guinea who ascribed an epidemic of pleurisy to a sheep in the missionary's possession, then to his goats, and finally to a portrait of Queen Victoria; and Sagard's Hurons who were convinced that some shadow-pictures of rabbits he made for them produced an unusually heavy catch of fish.¹ These are savage representations; but it is impossible to see what can be their 'collective' character in the peculiar meaning which this school gives to the term. The hat, the cassock, the sheep, the portrait, could not arouse memories—and the associated emotions—connected with the great tribal occasions, when the secrets of the tribe concerning the totem,

¹ *Les Fonctions mentales*, pp. 70-2.

the gods, the sacred objects, and so forth, were ceremonially communicated ; they could not be ' collective ' in that sense. They would certainly be collective ideas in the familiar sense in which the ideas of a group of people, savage or civilized, are the ideas of the individuals composing the group.

The common element in all these representations, the priests' dress, the portrait, and so on, is one which man has brought up with him out of the animal and instinctive stage of his evolution, and which enters into the timidities and conservatisms of civilized minds. It is the fear of the new, the strange, the unknown, and the tendency to ascribe to such things power, which by the remotest of possibilities may be beneficial, but in any event is dangerous and hurtful if not dealt with in the right way. There is nothing essentially collective in this state of mind. As the lone wolf may have his doubts about the man with a gun as well as when running with the pack, so the individual ' primitive ' may fear and take precautions against many things in his experience—he may, for instance, make a fetich for himself out of the peculiar stick or stone which has brought luck to him alone—without ' tapping ', as this theory supposes he must, the tribal consciousness. It is therefore an over-emphasis on the part of this school to regard the undoubtedly very great influence of tribal customs upon the individual, at that stage of his development which we have named the Integration of the Tribe or of Custom, as constituting a type of mentality which cuts him off from every other stage by its peculiarly ' collective ' character.

THE THEORY OF M. LÉVY-BRUHL

A 'DIFFERENT' MENTALITY

(b) MYSTIQUE AND LA LOI DE PARTICIPATION

- I. **T**HE term 'mystique' is one of those which M. Lévy-Bruhl most frequently uses to indicate the difference between primitive mentality and that of modern man. In the one definition which he gives of it, he affirms, in expounding the nature of collective representations, that there is in them 'an influence, a virtue, an occult power, variable according to the objects and the circumstances, but always real for the primitive, and forming an integral part of his representations'. This activity of the mind is mystical in 'the strictly definite sense' of 'belief in forces, influences, activities, imperceptible by the senses but nevertheless real'.¹ It is evident how near this description of mystical comes to defining religion in general. It reminds one, for example, of De La Saussaye's formula that religion is 'belief in super-human powers and worship of them'. This is significant because it suggests the possibility that 'mystical' thus defined is not a quality peculiar to primitive mentality, emphasizing its difference, but an element in all religion from its most rudimentary to its most spiritual forms.

It is, in fact, the case that for this author 'mystique' has, in many of its applications, the general sense of 'religious'. All religion is for him the product of the 'mystique' mentality, from its simplest form, which he rightly sees in Mana,² the unseen 'force, influence,

¹ *Les Fonctions mentales*, p. 30.

² *Op. cit.*, pp. 147-8. Cf. *La Mentalité primitive*, pp. 403-4.

activity' ascribed by the savage to all things strange and mysterious to him, onward to the modern religious systems, which, in the conclusion of his earlier work, he clearly connects with the persistence down to the present of the 'mystical and prelogical mentality'. It is a point to be dealt with later that he maintains that this mentality not only coexists, but must always coexist in civilized society and the civilized mind with what he calls, by contrast, the 'logical' mentality. This, it is evident, makes it difficult to regard its 'mystique' quality as one of the differences cutting off sharply the mentality of primitive man from that of modern and civilized man. M. Lévy-Bruhl, however, is keenly concerned to emphasize that difference; and it is in his over-emphasis of it that he lays himself open to the following criticisms.

1. An interesting example of his unsuccessful endeavour to establish this qualitative difference is found in his treatment of Perception in the savage. 'Primitive men do not perceive anything as we do.' They have, of course, the same senses and the same cerebral apparatus, but account must be taken of the influence upon every perception of the 'collective representations'. In consequence of these, every object presented to perception has 'some mystical properties inseparable from it' by the primitive mind.¹ To that mind 'all reality is mystical, like all action, and consequently all perception'.² We have, however, seen reason to doubt whether the extent, to which these collective representations enter into the ordinary thought of the savage, is so great as he supposes. This is also true of perception. Many of the examples he gives concern the attitude of the savage mind to the perception of things new and strange; and it is indeed the most striking primitive trait of that mind that it generally invests the unfamiliar and uncomprehended with

¹ *Les Fonctions mentales*, p. 37.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 67.

mysterious power. It is a psychological attitude not peculiar to the savage, but found in the civilized child, the peasant, and even in the cultured, wherever fear of the unknown is present. Genetically it is the first stage of the activity of intelligence which succeeds the Integration of Instinct.

This sense of mysterious power in things, which is what M. Lévy-Bruhl really means by the 'mystique', is the result of that imaginative activity of the mind, vaguely constructive, emotionally motivated, and always trembling on the brink of action, which is so near to the mental state of the creatures of instinct when they are within sight or hearing of the unfamiliar, but which is so different in power and promise, and which the savage shares with the civilized child at an early period of its mental life. There is nothing essentially 'collective' about it: it may be very much an individual experience: and compared with it 'collective representations' or customary tribal ideas are rather advanced and elaborate constructions. Apart, therefore, from the new and strange, which always touches the spring of this tendency, and apart from the perception of objects or situations which recall to him sacred or impressive associations derived from the tribal religion and its ceremonies, or from traditional notions of magic and its practices, a great part of the objective world must be to the perception of savage man little different from what it is to us. In a number of passages M. Lévy-Bruhl admits that, 'where an immediate practical interest is involved',¹ or where 'collective representations' are not specially invoked, primitive man will 'feel, judge, and conduct himself most often in the way we should expect. The inferences he will make will be exactly those which appear to us reasonable in the circumstances. If he has shot a brace of game, for instance, and can only find one to

¹ *Les Fonctions mentales*, p. 40.

pick up, he will ask himself what has become of the other, and look for it.' ¹ Thus in a large part of his ordinary thought and action the perception of savage man is indistinguishable from our own in our least mystical moments. It is, accordingly, putting it too strongly to say that for him 'toute perception . . . est mystique'. ²

2. In the interests of his theory of the supreme influence of collective representations, M. Lévy-Bruhl unduly depreciates certain facts of psychology. He gives examples of the curious habit some savages have of identifying the image of an object, say, a picture or a moulded form, with the object itself, so as to exhibit the same fear or reverence towards it. Thus the Bororo people of Brazil attached to a picture of a 'bull-roarer' in a book, the mystic properties of the article itself; and the lion-shaped feet of a pot excited the terror of Mississippi Indians as though they were the lion itself, an unknown animal to them, and therefore the more dreaded. On these facts he sharply distinguishes his view from that of the ordinary psychologist. 'Must one say,' he asks, 'with M. de Groot, that we have here an inability to discriminate between a simple resemblance and an identity, and suppose that the primitives are subject to the illusion of the little child who believes her doll to be living?' ³

M. Lévy-Bruhl disposes of the parallel to the child in a rather perfunctory way, by contrasting its mental attitude, as that of play and only half serious, with the profound seriousness of these beliefs of primitive man. On the contrary, the parallel is extremely close; and it is probable that in this particular the child, at the early imaginative age when play is most serious and absorbing as well as satisfying, recapitulates the mental character of truly primitive man. We describe the

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 79.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 67.

³ *Op. cit.*, pp. 43-4.

analogy in this fashion. The essential tendency of all thought, on our theory, is towards unification. In the case alike of the child and the primitive savage, the unification is imaginative rather than reasoned. In both, the particulars within their mental unifications are not clearly discriminated. Their concepts are indefinite, impressionistic, and fluid. The Bororo do not distinguish as we do between a pictured 'bull-roarer' and a real one, just as a little girl of three known to the present writer, after seeing a vivid picture of a tiger, asked at night whether it could come into her room. There is certainly not there an 'association of ideas', to which M. Lévy-Bruhl objects, if by ideas are understood clear-cut conceptions, such as that of 'soul' or 'spirit' as employed in the earlier theories of Animism; but there is an association of image-concepts, ideas in the making, not themselves distinctly integrated and therefore not clearly discriminated, thrown loosely together by the emotion of fear of unknown, dangerous power.

The child's mentality is thus 'not logical' in the sense in which M. Lévy-Bruhl says the same of primitive man. It does not work with clearly defined ideas or concepts. It is 'prelogical' also in his sense, for it is not impatient of contradictions: the doll may be living at one moment and a mere bundle of rags the next, just as the fetich of the savage may be at one time 'sacred' and at another 'profane'. The mind of the child is even 'mystique', with its invisible playmates and so on, in that it manifests a 'belief in forces, influences, activities, imperceptible by the senses but nevertheless real'. It has, in fact, all the characteristics of the primitive mentality—without the 'représentations collectives'.

3. In pursuing his theory of a 'different' mentality and therefore of a different perception, M. Lévy-Bruhl sees himself compelled to a breach not merely with

Psychology but with Folk-Lore. R. R. Marett says, 'From folk-lore to the anthropology of savages—that, I am sure, is the only sound method in social psychology.'¹ Our author endeavours to maintain, on the contrary, that the superstitions of the modern peasant are something very different from the creations of savage mentality. 'Belief in ghosts might', he admits, 'almost tempt one to think that the difference is only one of degree. Doubtless, these beliefs can be regarded in our societies as a survival which bears witness to a more ancient mental state, and one in other times more general.' This is precisely our view. 'But', he proceeds, 'let us guard against seeing in it a faithful image, though somewhat weakened, of the mentality of the primitives.'² The argument to which he goes on, that the least cultivated members of our society make a clear distinction between the natural and the supernatural world, while the savage does not, is completely unconvincing.

There are, to give one concrete example, many cairns in the West Highlands of Scotland. These are erected by the mourners carrying a corpse in its coffin to burial in a distant churchyard, at any spot on the way at which they may have paused to rest. The primitive, generalized, and now forgotten idea behind the practice, is the almost universal one that the ghost or spirit is liable, on the slightest opportunity, to leave the dead body and, to the discomfort of the community, wander at large. The cairn is probably a substitutionary tomb which, it is hoped, the spirit, if it has escaped from the body, will accept as its resting-place. It is, at any rate, certain that the cairn is regarded as in some sense the abode of the ghost. A Highlander of one of these districts informed the writer that men say on a dark night: 'I do not like

¹ *Psychology and Folk-Lore*, p. 19.

² *Les Fonctions mentales*, pp. 66-7.

to pass this way ; there are cairns about here ' ; and a friend has remarked to him in broad daylight : ' I must put a stone on my father's cairn.' There is no sharp distinction here, such as M. Lévy-Bruhl suggests, between two worlds, the natural and the supernatural. For the rustic mind as for the primitive, of which it is the lineal descendant, the seen and the unseen beings of these superstitions inhabit the same world.

With respect, then, to this ' mystical ' character of primitive thought, we see no reason to consider it unique or peculiar to that mentality. The ' mystique ' quality as defined by this author, namely, belief in invisible, intangible, occult powers, or, as we should express it, the tendency to attribute to objects and phenomena which are of deep interest, a vaguely composite quality of power-life-will, is the primitive generalized form, the creation of a generalized mentality, from which have developed not only man's highest religion and mysticism, but also his philosophy and even his science. It is his first attempt at the unification of his life by means of intelligence, at comprehension instead of apprehension of phenomena, to grasp with his mind in place of merely making an instinctive response ; but it is the ancestor of all other unifications whatsoever. The mentality is the same all through, in the sense that a living and growing thing is the same at all stages of its growth. The difference is in the degree of development of the mental powers, especially of the co-ordinative, unifying powers of the mind, on the one hand, and on the other, in the social environment with its greater or less culture and its common stock of ideas, traditions and customs.

II. The Law of Participation, according to M. Lévy-Bruhl, is a generalization from the facts of the mentality of primitive man, which cannot be resolved into any law of the normal psychology of the modern mind. He regards it as an important discovery from that

point of view. This law, however, it seems to us, merely embraces some of the phenomena and operations of the wider and indeed universal law of Unification, working under the conditions and limitations, both individual and social, of the primitive mind. The facts adduced by him can be accounted for without recourse to his hypothesis.

In speaking of the mystical connexions which the savage sees so frequently among living beings and natural objects, he says : ' Under diverse forms and in different degrees they all imply a "participation" between the beings or objects connected in a collective representation.' ¹ This participation he defines thus :

' I would say that in the collective representations of primitive mentality, objects, living beings and phenomena can, in a fashion incomprehensible to us, be at one and the same time themselves and something other than themselves. In a way not less incomprehensible, they emit and receive forces, virtues, qualities, and mystic actions, which make themselves felt beyond them without ceasing to be where they are.' ²

In the former of these statements ' participations ' are described which imply an identity ; in the latter, the phenomena of ' action at a distance ' or magical action. The latter will come into view in our later discussion of Causality and Magic.³ In respect of the former, M. Lévy-Bruhl speaks in this context of a ' mystic community of essence between living beings, which, for *our* thought, cannot be thus confounded without absurdity. For example ' (quoting von den Steinen) ' the Trumai (a tribe of northern Brazil) say they are aquatic animals. . . . The Bororo boast of being red araras (paroquets).'

' This does not mean that after their death they become araras, nor that the araras are metamorphosed Bororo, and must be treated as such. It means something quite different. . . . It is

¹ *Les Fonctions mentales*, p. 76.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 76.

³ Chapter XIX.

not a name that they assume, nor is it a relationship they are asserting. What they wish to convey is an essential identity. M. von den Steinen considers it inconceivable that they can be, at one and the same time, human beings and birds with red plumage. But for a mentality governed by the law of participation that is no difficulty at all. All societies of a totemic form employ collective representations of the same kind, implying an apparent identity between the individuals of a totemic group and their totem.¹

There is no doubt about the facts which M. Lévy-Bruhl adduces. But it is not necessary to invent a new law, the 'law of participation', to account for them, nor to regard that law as marking off the mentality of primitive man as *sui generis*. The mental activity in question is simply a mode of the characteristic operation of the human mind, that of integration or unification. In the mind of primitive man it takes the form of imaginative identification. His mentality is still largely visual, an 'eye-mentality'. His first unifications of his experience are thus a throwing together of images, instead of classifications and distinct conceptions. He paints his thoughts like a scene-painter, and the colours often 'run'. He desires, for example (in pursuit, as always, of that inward unification of himself through safety and satisfaction, which is peace of mind), unification with his totem animal, to be in harmony with it, as we should say, to be at one with it, to feel it on his side. The simplest way of doing this is, having the image of the totem in his mind, to see himself imaginatively within that image, the image of himself dimly coalescing with the image of the totem, himself vaguely surrounded, as by a halo or an 'aura', with the meaning, qualities, and powers he ascribes to the totem. This imaginative identification with the totem is obviously the essence of those rites, designed to secure the multiplication of the totem

¹ *Les Fonctions mentales*, pp. 77-8.

food-animal, in which the tribe imitates or dramatizes the life and production of it.

We are familiar with the same trait in the psychology of the child. The child who says, 'I am an engine' or 'I am a tiger', making appropriate movements and sounds the while, is enjoying an imaginative identification of a genuinely primitive character. It is not a justifiable distinction to say that the child is playing, while the savage is intensely serious at his rites. As a matter of fact, there are elements both of enjoyment and of seriousness in the simple dramatizations of both. The boy of about three astride of a walking-stick which has to him the mystic value of a horse, is as 'solemn as a judge'; but the undoubted interest and enjoyment of the play are forms of the pleasure which Nature attaches to every form of unification in living things,¹ from the mere taking of food to the discovery of a new idea, and from the dramatic representations of the child or the savage to the satisfaction of a Siddons or a Salvini in their art. Thus also the 'primitive', dancing his fertility-dance with the tribe, does it with all the gravity appropriate to a rite upon which his very life depends, and to the mysterious and dangerous powers he invokes; but doubtless there is in his heart also that same joy which is in the play of the child, the joy subtly inwoven with Unification by Nature seeking determinedly, as from the beginning of evolution, integration. It is the joy of an achieved unity, a 'drama' or 'thing done', enhanced by the fact that it is done by the tribe in unison. Miss Jane Harrison has admirably traced the emergence of the majestic Greek Drama from the primitive ritual and especially the ritual dances of the savage ancestors of the Greeks. The progressive encroachment of the *theatron* or place, for the spectators upon the *orchestra* or dancing-place, marks, as she shows, the transition. Originally, the

¹ See Chapter XXVI, Unification and Happiness.

Dionysia, the festival of Dionysos in the spring-time, was a ritual dance for the bringing back of life and fertility to the earth, in which the whole people danced, as savages do in Africa and Australia to-day. It was thus a 'dromenon', a thing being done by every one. With growth of the people in culture and organization there was a gradual surrender of the action to a specialized class, the priests and then the actors, the rest of the people withdrawing to look on, to be the spectators of what was now becoming the Drama.¹

There are thus in the process of development Miss Harrison describes, three stages or types of 'participation', not in M. Lévy-Bruhl's special sense but in the familiar meaning of the word. The whole of the people participate in the magico-religious action, in which feeling and movement predominate over thought, and in which there is a vaguely imagined unification with the unseen forces which are invoked, together with an exhilarated sense of power arising from the united action of the tribe. This is the first stage, manifesting the truly primitive mentality. At the second stage the intermediaries—medicine-man, witch-doctor, and priest—imaginatively identify themselves and are identified by the tribe with the power and beings they seek to influence, and so acquire something of their nature, which makes them personally charged with mystic and dangerous power and thus the subjects of many taboos. That is the character of *their* participation. At the third stage, where the drama is no longer ritual but Art, the actor participates in the person, at first divine and then human, he represents, imaginatively identifies himself with him, so that the Greek actor *is* Agamemnon, Salvini *is* Othello, Mrs. Siddons *is* Queen Katharine, with a certain passionate reality; while the spectators, looking on at an action in which they have no part, participate

¹ *Ancient Art and Ritual*, J. E. Harrison (Williams and Norgate), Ch. V.

in it only in the refined and abstract sense that they imaginatively identify themselves with the characters, and, if there is tragedy, are 'purified by pity and terror' through that sympathetic participation. The pleasure, one may add, which accompanies the seeing even of tragic drama, is that which constantly accompanies a unification, whether in outward action or within the mind or both. This is an example, accordingly, of the *same* mentality persisting but undergoing natural changes, from the primitive ancestors of the Greek people whose mentality, by M. Lévy-Bruhl's standard, was prelogical and mystical, and guided by the law of participation, up to the cultured Greek whose mentality created Logic. There is no question, therefore, of a 'different' mentality as between the primitive mind and the civilized, except in stages of evolution and in degree of integration and differentiation. 'The Law of Participation' is embraced in the wider law of Unification, under which, in the hands of this author it has the merit of calling attention to striking features of the ruder forms of the human mind.

In concluding this study of M. Lévy-Bruhl's position, we may add a remark which is of some importance to our own. Towards the end of *Les Fonctions mentales* he affirms that the prelogical and mystical mentality will continue to exist indefinitely in the modern mind side by side with the logical mentality. One might suppose, he admits, that in the natural order of things the logical mentality, impatient of the 'contradictions' involved in the prelogical representations, would encroach upon the other mentality and ultimately banish it. This, however, he maintains, would be 'a hasty and illegitimate conclusion'. The prelogical mentality will continue to exist, because it is its very nature to ignore the demands of logic and to be patient of contradictions. On the other hand, he contrasts the meagre satisfaction which mere knowledge attains, with the

far richer satisfaction which the prelogical mentality finds in its 'participations'. The illustration he uses is instructive. It is that of the idea of God. As an object of thought,

'God', he says, 'may be at one and the same time in our society investigated by logical thought and given in the collective representations of another order. The rational effort to know God seems at once to unite the thinking subject to God and at the same time to set him at a distance from Him. The necessity of conforming to logical demands is opposed to the participations between man and God which are not capable of being represented without contradiction. Knowledge is thus reduced to a very small matter. But what need of this rational knowledge for the believer who feels himself united to his God? The consciousness he has of the participation of his being in the divine essence—does not that procure for him an assurance for faith in comparison with which logical certitude shall always be a pale, cold, and almost indifferent thing?'¹

There is something oddly familiar to the student of the philosophy of religion about these statements. One recognizes the old antithesis between rationalism and intuitionism, between reason and faith, between 'religious experience' and logic, between the mystic and the man of science. The familiar answer must be given that it is a false antithesis. The necessity for unification, which the mind of man shares with the whole of the rest of the universe, could not tolerate permanently the existence of two such opposed mentalities either in the same mind or in the same society. The determined resistance of the 'prelogical' mind to logic, its 'imperviousness to experience', as M. Lévy-Bruhl describes it,² is simply the resistance of ignorant and invincible prejudice. One sees how it is that he has taken for his model of the 'prelogical' mentality the savage mind within the tribal integration, though the tribal mind is in some respects far from primitive. The reason is that the essential character

¹ *Les Fonctions mentales*, pp. 453-4.

² *Op. cit.*, pp. 61 ff.

of that integration, especially some distance from the earliest primitive state and in the more advanced forms of tribal life, is just this solidification of custom, tradition and authority round the individual, until he is almost embalmed in it like bees in amber. But in that tribal mentality, as Lady Macbeth says of Banquo's life, 'nature's copy's not eterne'; and its characteristics, except as radically transformed, have no title to permanence in civilized mentality.

The strength, finally, of the antithesis for M. Lévy-Bruhl between the prelogical and mystical mentality and the logical lies in his conception of 'logical'. One perceives, in fact, that the word has two different meanings in his use of it. On the one hand, he refers frequently to *our* mentality, namely that of civilized man in general, as 'logical' in contrast with the primitive mind. This, as Prof. McDougall clearly shows, is a pure abstraction, having no existence in fact. As he says, referring to Mr. Cornford and M. Lévy-Bruhl, 'they commit the great error of assuming that the mental life of civilized man is conducted by each individual in a purely rational and logical manner; they overlook the fact that we also are largely dominated by collective representations; for these collective representations are nothing but ideas of objects to which traditional sentiments, sentiments of awe, of fear, of respect, of love, of reverence, are attached'.¹ On the other hand, 'logical' has for M. Lévy-Bruhl the narrower meaning also, which it has for pure physical science and for the Positivism of Comte. The 'logical' reasoning of the Positivist excludes everything which implies the existence of unseen, immaterial, spiritual powers and beings: these are the creation of a 'mystic' mentality. It regards as involving contradictions intolerable to a pure logic, such an idea as that of spirit or of God, which implies the possibility of

¹ *The Group Mind*, p. 74.

transcending space and time, of a being who is present 'here' and 'there' at the same moment, and of power exerted without some material medium. These are permitted only to the 'prelogical' mentality which is not perturbed by contradictions. The attitude of a sort of superior despair, with which this school grants that the prelogical and mystical mentality (which means really that of religion and of the religious theory of the universe) shall permanently resist the advance of a materialistic and positivistic 'logic', is precisely that of Brahmins permitting the lower castes to retain their crude superstitions on the ground that their mentality is capable of nothing better.

There is thus behind M. Lévy-Bruhl's theories of the mind of primitive man, a philosophic system, and even a dogmatic position, which is that of materialistic Positivism. We maintain an opposite theory, whose dogmas, no doubt, have a certain influence on our conclusions, but which we regard as equally logical with the theory of this school. They and we alike pursue the ancestral tendency of primitive man to seek a Unification of the whole of life and experience. In our view, the inveterate endeavour of 'the primitive' to unify his world by adding the mystical and the unseen to his physical powers and resources, even when it seems to proceed from the imperfection and limitations of his mind and leads him to bizarre conclusions, is on the true road to a comprehension of reality. A logical conception of the universe, a philosophy which can in any sense satisfy all thinking minds, must include in its interpretation of existence not only those moral and spiritual values which are at its summit, but those unseen realities, beings and powers, which are the subject of religion.

XI

THE FORMATION OF PRIMITIVE CONCEPTS

(a) IMAGINATION AND THE IMAGE-CONCEPT

THE French school of sociologists, including M. Lévy-Bruhl, do not give a genetic account of primitive mentality, and even disclaim the attempt. It is a radical defect of their method that they regard as primitive the mind of the savage at a somewhat developed stage of tribal organization. With their special emphasis on 'collective representations' and upon the power of the group in moulding the ideas or representations of the individual, they exploit what is unquestionably the most striking characteristic of the tribal integration, namely the subordination of the individual to the tradition, custom, and law of the tribe. So satisfied are they that the tribal stage is the primitive, that MM. Hubert and Mauss seek to derive the very categories of human thought from tribal customs, the category of Time from the tribal sacred calendar, of Space from the arrangement of the camp, and of Causality from magical operations.¹ But in arriving at these conclusions, the members of this school treat as equally 'primitive' the often well-advanced culture of the American Indians, on the one hand, and the much ruder and simpler condition of the Australian natives, on the other. It is true that they may point to certain complexities in the customs of the latter, which appear to justify this equal treatment; but these complexities are themselves of a very primitive character, and occur within a truly primitive type of mind. We may illustrate by an analogy.

¹ See Chapters XII and XIX.

The Marsupials in Australia are an extremely ancient form of animal life. An equilibrium upon the island continent between that early animal type and its environment, has maintained it in existence, while it has almost disappeared from the rest of the world. Nevertheless, within that primitive type there has been specialization, so that besides the familiar rodent-like forms there have been elaborated, so to say, insectivora and even carnivora, which are still, however, Marsupials. In like manner, the human natives of Australia are an extremely ancient type of humanity. Their skulls are favoured by palaeontologists for comparison with those of the great apes and of Palaeolithic man ; and their brains, deficient in the prefrontal area of the cortex, leave their minds also lacking in that co-ordinative capacity or power of unification which is the creator of the higher forms of thought. It is unquestionable that certain aspects of their group-life are highly elaborated, notably their ceremonies for the initiation of their youth and their totemic classes in connexion with exogamy ; but these are specializations upon which all the interest and inventive energy, such as they have been, of that race, have been concentrated for immemorial generations, until they are like a complicated arabesque based on some simple form.

The really primitive characters of the mind of the Australian aborigine are such as these. There is first an animal-like accuracy of perception and knowledge in what concerns his prey for food. Second, there is a tendency to see in everything around him, especially in the new or strange, a vague, indiscriminated quality, which is best described by a composite word, ' power-life-will ', whether it be in his own knife to which he prays to go kill his enemy, or in his throwing-stick, which, being a little mysterious, is sacred, though his spear which it throws is not, or in Baiame or Darumulun, the dim supreme power or spirit. Third, there

is an extreme suggestibility to the traditional beliefs of the clan or to the pronouncements of authoritative men among his people, the witch-doctors or sorcerers. This is a truly primitive type of mind ; and when one treats primitive man thus genetically, as emerging from the instinctive animal stage into that of intelligence and human grasp upon life, it soon appears impossible, or an anachronism, to derive the categories of his thought—time, space, and causality—from the integrations of his tribal custom and practice. It is necessary to begin with the savage at the point where he has had, for his very life's sake, to make important though unconscious calculations of time, and had to take account of space in the matter of distance, and habitually acted on the supposition that other things and beings, and himself, were causes. It is the rudimentary concepts of this primitive man that we are now to consider.

William James thus defines Conception and the Concept : 'The function by which we . . . identify a numerically distinct and permanent subject of discourse is called Conception, and the thoughts which are its vehicles are called Concepts.'¹ He adds, referring to the comparative changelessness of concepts, that conceptions 'form an essentially discontinuous system, and translate the process of our perceptual experience, which is naturally a flux, into a set of stagnant and petrified terms'.² There are two elements in this character of the Concept to which we call attention. They are those of Unification and Discrimination. The concept unifies a number of particular things into a whole for thought, as 'death', 'life', 'whiteness', 'blackness' each includes under its general character many things which are dead or living or white or black. At the same time, in being thus unified, each concept is made to stand out as a more or less distinct whole apart from other concepts : they are discriminated

¹ *Principles of Psychology*, vol. i, p. 461.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 468.

from each other in proportion as they are unified within themselves. Thus 'death' or 'dead', in so far as the concept grasps 'dead' things into a coherent whole of meaning, clearly discriminates those things from other particulars which, having the common characteristic of being alive, are unified into the concept 'living' or 'life'. These correlative qualities of the concept, unity or integration and distinctness or differentiation, are important for our discussion, because it is in the lack of firmly unified and therefore distinct concepts, and the possession only of diffuse, vaguely co-ordinated and consequently undiscriminated concepts, that the primitive type of mind differs from the highly developed and cultured. These characteristics of the primitive mind are consequences of the nature of that mind itself, especially its deficiency in co-ordinative power, which is itself the result of the unco-ordinated character of the primitive type of brain. The growth of the tendency to unification, with its complement of discrimination, in which is embodied the movement of the evolutionary process in general towards integration through differentiation, may be observed in tracing the genetic relation between conception and the simpler and earlier operations of the mind, Sensation and Perception.

Sensation, the feeling in the mind of an impression from the external world upon one or other of the senses, 'differs', according to William James, 'from perception only in the extreme simplicity of its object or content . . . its function is that of mere acquaintance with a fact. Perception's function, on the other hand, is knowledge about a fact; and this knowledge admits of numberless degrees of complication.'¹ The relation between the two is excellently defined by Prof. Sully, when he says that perception 'supplements a sense-impression by an accompaniment or escort of revived

¹ *Principles of Psychology*, vol. ii, pp. 1-2.

sensations, the whole aggregate of actual and revived sensations being solidified or "integrated" into the form of a percept, that is, an apparently immediate apprehension of an object now present in a particular locality or region of space'.¹ Thus the basis of Perception is in Sensation. There is, moreover, a hierarchy of the senses; and they follow each other, roughly speaking, in order of evolution. In animal development, the tactual, olfactory, auditory, and visual sensations probably succeed each other in dominance in this order. Clearly the advance is from the less integrated and differentiated to the more. It is progress in unification and at the same time in discrimination. The crown of the process is the visual; and it is a great stride forward in co-ordinative power when the animal forms, and thinks in, images.

With the acquisition of stereoscopic vision and the consequent power of focusing attention, the visual centres in the brain grew in size and predominance. In man the area of the brain over the optical centres developed early; and it is not in this region, over the temporal lobes, that there is any great difference in the *shape* of the skull between the crania of the highest apes, primitive man, and the civilized modern. It is in the prefrontal area, where the organ of co-ordinating, comparing, logical thought is ultimately situated, that the difference, which gives intellectual man his broad and high forehead, is most marked. It has been already noted that the civilized child, in whom the same prefrontal region of the brain develops late, passes through an imaginative period, when play is the very warp for the woof of imagination, inanimate things have life, dolls are personalities, any odd piece of earthenware may be a rich symbol, and imaginary unseen companions are gravely regarded as real. It is probable that the child of civilization here recapitulates an imaginative

¹ *Outlines of Psychology* (Revised Edition), p. 122.

period in the childhood of the race, represented by ancient primitive man and by the savage of the present day.

In ordinary Perception the imagination also plays a considerable part. In looking at a distant view, the eye sees some blurred white shapes on a green field. These grow more definite in outline ; and we perceive quite clearly that they are sheep. This is the characteristic action of imagination in perception. It makes a coherent, intelligible unity for thought by taking the rough sketch provided by the visual sensation, filling it in with the materials presented by former sensations and stored in memory, and thus lining in and colouring a picture of a known object. It is a familiar fact also that this process sometimes results in illusion. One has seen an object at the edge of a field of corn, and imagination has completed the outline until it is manifestly a man mowing : we can even see the sweep of his scythe in the shimmering air of the hot day ; and yet it is only a stunted thorn tree after all.

This is the mode of operation in the perceptions of primitive man. There is a direct lineage between the imaginative unifications of the primitive mind and those of the genius of civilized life, whether the latter be the patient induction of scientific facts, crowned and illuminated by the swift imaginative perception, by a Newton or a Darwin, of the completed theory as a whole, or whether they be the flashing visions of the poet or prophet. The difference arises mainly from the under-development in the primitive type of mind of those powers of co-ordination, comparison, and classification, which are resident in the prefrontal areas of the brain. Free from the inhibitions and corrections of this later-developed power of logical and critical thought, the imaginative constructions of primitive man in his perceptions would, it might be expected, be much more subject to hallucination and illusion than those of the

cultivated mind ; and this is confirmed by experience. With regard, indeed, to those perceptions which concern his everyday life, the natural objects of his region, the habits of his food-animals and the like, the savage lives very much on the instinctive plane, and tracks his prey, adapts himself to its movements and so on, in the same semi-instinctive way as do the higher carnivora. But as soon as these semi-instinctive adjustments are met by some obstacle to their smooth working, as soon as something new or strange forces itself upon perception by interrupting the flow of habitual sensations and actions, the new power of the mind to which Nature so deeply trusts the future of man, Imagination, steps in and takes control.

It is, to repeat a metaphor, rather like Phaëthon taking the reins of Apollo. The imaginative construction has much of the hasty, impulsive, reflexive character of the instinctive stage which precedes it. It is done, moreover, under the influence of the emotions of fear and desire, particularly the former. Hence, when imagination, in supplementing the perceptions of the savage, is applied, as it naturally is, to the new and strange, to the mysterious in ordinary experience, its unifications are often illusory and of the nature of hallucination. He sees a ghost which is not there ; or he invests the uncomprehended phenomenon with a power of which all that he can say at first is that it is dangerous, and must be approached or handled with the utmost circumspection. An example of the reality of the savage's illusions was told to the writer by Dr. J. A. Hadfield, author of *Psychology and Morals*, who was present as a boy on the occasion. The missionary on a South Sea island went fishing along with a native. The place was the bank of a river near a bluff on which the natives piled up the bones of their dead after the flesh had been removed, and which was naturally supposed to be haunted by ghosts. At a

critical moment in the fishing the native was found to have disappeared. Questioned on his return as to the reason for his disappearance, he replied, 'Did not you see the ghost?' and described how he followed it through the bush for a considerable distance, until he lost it near the bluff. The man was convinced that this was a real experience. As Prof. James says, 'An hallucination is a strictly sensational form of consciousness, as good and true a sensation as if there were a real object there. The object happens not to be there, that is all.'¹ Such hallucinations in the perceptions of uncritical minds are the source of many ghost stories in modern times; and similar illusions of perception, created by the undisciplined imagination, must have played a great part in the evolution of the Animism of primitive man.

The transition from Perception to Conception and the Concept is made through this image-making activity of the mind. The imaginative area of the brain, based upon the visual centres, is earlier in the order of evolution than the co-ordinative prefrontal area, and accordingly, unities in the mind are imaginative and pictorial, before they become logical and reasoned. This is reflected in primitive language. M. Lévy-Bruhl quotes an authority on the North American Klamath language to the effect that 'it obeys a very marked tendency, which M. Gatschet calls *pictorial*, that is to say, it obeys a necessity to speak to the eyes, to picture and to paint what it is desired to express'.² The most primitive concepts are thus Image-Concepts. The language of savages, as M. Lévy-Bruhl truly says, is marked by the lack of generic terms, corresponding to general ideas, 'and by the extraordinary abundance of specific terms, that is, terms designating beings or objects of which a particular and precise image is pictured when they are named'.³ The quotation he

¹ *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 115.

² *Les Fonctions mentales*, p. 161.

³ *Op. cit.*, p. 190.

gives from Mr. Brough Smith concerning the extinct Tasmanians is singularly descriptive of this type of mind.

‘The Tasmanians had no words representing abstract ideas : for each variety of gum-tree or brake, &c., they had a name, but no equivalent for tree. They could not express abstractly the qualities, hard, sweet, hot, cold, long, short, round, &c. For hard they said “like a stone” ; . . . for round, “like a ball” , “like the moon” and so forth, usually adding a gesture to the word, and confirming by a sign addressed to the eyes what they wished to convey.’¹

There are two characteristics to be remarked in the primitive mind as thus described. The first is its tendency to individualize perceived things, because of inability to generalize. This is what the ‘New’ Psychology calls Concretism. Jung, for example, says :

‘Primitive thinking and feeling are exclusively concretistic : they are always related to sensation. The thought of the primitive has no detached independence, but clings to the material phenomenon. His thought and feeling depend upon sensation, and are only faintly differentiated from it.’²

This we have designated as the Atomism of the generalized mind, its particularism, its habitual flitting from one object of thought to another, without resting long enough upon one to relate and compare it with others, which latter process is that of conception. This quality, we have noted, indicates its nearness to the instinctive, reflexive stage of animal development. The second characteristic here suggested is the tendency of the mind, in seeking to pass beyond unrelated sensations and perceptions, to do so by means of an image. Thus the very primitive savage such as the Tasmanian, when he struggles mentally towards the concept ‘round’, makes an imaginative unification of two concrete things, on the ground of their similarity for perception, the round thing to which he is referring and the

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 190.

² *Psychological Types*, p. 533.

moon, and, saying 'like the moon', advances to an Image-Concept.

Perception and Conception, thus linked together or mutually interpenetrated by the Image-Concept, like the yellow and red by the orange of the spectrum, cannot be defined in rigid distinction from each other. In speaking of the sense of sameness, which is 'the very keel and backbone of our thinking', William James says in his vivid and colloquial way :

'In this sense creatures extremely low in the intellectual scale may have conception. All that is required is that they should recognize the same experience again. A polyp would be a conceptual thinker if a feeling of "Hollo! Thingumbob again!" ever flitted through its mind.'¹

To regard this as a rudimentary concept, which we hold to be just, is to give to the concept a meaning far asunder from that which it has in the system of M. Lévy-Bruhl, for whom the thought even of fairly intelligent savages is scarcely conceptual at all. It is also to differentiate our theory of the concept and its origin from the view of M. Durkheim and his school, in the larger role we give to the individual mind in its formation than to the group-mind. Perception and Conception, as thus seen near their beginnings, are not to be assigned substantially to different mentalities, but are difficult to cut off from each other, because they are 'moments' in the life of a growing thing, the developing power of man's thought. The character which they have in common is that each is a mental unification. Their difference is in the greater or less completeness of that unification. The completeness, however, is not merely in the integration, for an instinctive reflex such as those of bees and ants, has a finish and definiteness denied to higher integrations of the mind, but in that the Concept is more richly

¹ *Principles of Psychology*, vol. i, p. 463.

differentiated within its unity than the product of mere perception. The percept 'tree' for the savage is an integration of visual sensations in association with former sensations of mass, height, shade, and the like, with the impulse near at hand to movement in relation to it, e.g. to pass round it, climb it, or stand in its shade. The concept 'tree' for the man of science is a rich integration of trees of all kinds, finely differentiated from each other, seen, it may be, only within the mind, and without any impulse to action at all. There are innumerable grades of ascent from the one to the other.

XII

THE FORMATION OF PRIMITIVE CONCEPTS

(b) VARENDONCK AND THE GROUP-THEORIES

IN pursuing further the relation of Perception to Conception we may refer to some of the discussions in J. Varendonck's work, *Evolution of the Conscious Faculties*.¹ We have seen that perception differs from sensation in that it unifies the immediate sense-impression with sensations already in memory. Varendonck makes a useful distinction between what he terms Reduplicative and Synthetical Memory. The memory which 'registers experience as in the sequence of the actual happenings and reproduces it faithfully' is reduplicative memory. Synthetical memory is 'the function which registers a selected classification of experience'.² Reduplicative memory Varendonck claims to have rescued from the inattention of other psychologists, though it has not been wholly ignored: it is, for example, what Sully calls 'reproductive imagination'. This description rightly emphasizes the image-form, the visual cinematographic character which recollection for the most part takes.³ Varendonck's is the better term, for it is, as Bergson says, 'true' memory. It is that operation of the mind in which all sense-experience, even when it is unconscious, is recorded in the brain in the chronological and connected order in which it occurs. It remains there somewhat like a cinematographic film for visual experience, and a phonographic record for auditory experience, in such fashion that the experience can, on some stimulus

¹ *Evolution of the Conscious Faculties* (Allen and Unwin).

² *Op. cit.*, p. 55.

³ *Outlines of Psychology*, p. 223.

either from within or without the mind, be unrolled or reproduced for the use of the mind in its more complex syntheses or unifications, as in Perception or Conception.

There are some points of considerable interest for our inquiry, in Varendonck's account of this form of memory. One is that it is a distinctly primitive activity of the mind. It can be traced very far down in the scale of conscious life, and plays a larger part in the mind of the child and the savage than in the mental life of adult and cultured man. It has the comparatively undifferentiated character of all primitive integrations. The same primitive quality is observed in defective minds. The study of these shows that

'whenever man's intellectual powers are impaired, reduplicative memory is the last mental function to disappear, and it is generally admitted that the higher faculties, constituting the latest acquisitions in the phylogeny, are the first to fall into disorder in case of disease: the fundamental reactions common to all organisms seem to be the most firmly established.'¹

It is in virtue of this fact that intoxication, which narcotizes first the higher, finer, and most recently acquired mental powers of civilized man, may leave him able to find his way home by a familiar road, when he employs reduplicative memory in unrolling almost mechanically the chain of habitual associations. This type of memory also explains extraordinary feats of recollection by mental defectives, like the idiots mentioned by Ribot who 'cannot make the most elementary calculations' but 'repeat without hesitation the complete multiplication table'.²

Lower down in the scale of life, this is the faculty upon which the training of animals depends. Maeterlinck has a delightful essay on a little dog which died when it was six months old, in which he describes the enormous number of things it comes to 'know' in its

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 45.

² Quoted by Varendonck, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

brief life. They were retained by this simple type of memory. Similarly, very young children may astonish us by repeating long passages of poetry, exercising the same form of recollection. It is, therefore, not surprising to find the identical characteristic in the primitive mind. This has been noted by many observers; and we may quote two examples given by this writer. Ribot remarks that 'it has often been noticed that, amongst the inferior races of mankind, the children who are sent to school . . . display at first an astonishing facility, which is suddenly arrested. Thus the aborigines of the Sandwich Isles display an excellent memory; they learn by heart with marvellous rapidity; but they cannot exercise their thinking faculties.' Dugas observes that 'missionaries have reported that certain savages are able to repeat without alteration a sermon which they have just heard, a feat of which Chateaubriand is also said to have been capable'.¹ Accordingly, primitive man exercises and depends upon this earliest type of memory to a much greater degree than civilized man. The fact has certain important consequences for our theory.

1. Reduplicative memory is singularly adapted to that quality of the primitive mind which we have called Atomism, its particularistic and concrete nature. The difficulty primitive man has in forming concepts and general ideas, his use of individual image-concepts, and the consequent presence in his language of many different names for things and situations which the civilized mind expresses by a single abstract term, necessitate a remarkable development of memory. It is, however, this simple type of memory which he possesses. Here also is provided a simple explanation of a phenomenon which has puzzled some observers. It seemed, for example, that the extreme complexity of his exogamic rules, and the ease with which he dis-

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 49.

criminated among them, indicated a more subtle and developed mind in, say, the Australian native, than other circumstances of his life and its conditions warranted. So also with the impressive elaboration of taboos among a tribe like the Todas, bewildering to a civilized memory. The intricacies, which, it must be noted, are constituted by a multiplicity of details added loosely to each other, are easily recorded and retained, and when necessary unrolled, by reduplicative memory.

It is in missing this point that M. Lévy-Bruhl, in endeavouring to establish a peculiar mentality for primitive man, makes an unnecessary mystery concerning the mental attitude of the Australian native youth in those initiations in which he acquires his knowledge of the numerous rules of exogamic and other customs. He says these facts are 'immédiatement sentis' by this peculiarly 'mystique' mentality.¹ But, so far from their being thus immediately felt, whatever that may mean, these numerous details are probably taught during the weeks and even months of the instructional process, and impressed upon the simply reduplicative memory. The immense hold of Custom upon the primitive mind is largely explained by the grasp of its detailed concreteness on that simple type of retentiveness. There is, moreover, the attractiveness of ritual alike for savage and for some modern minds in escape from Fatigue, from the effort of thought and the toil of moral endeavour. It is easier and a kind of rest to say and do a number of things, in a prescribed rhythm and routine, with the aid of reduplicative memory, than to pursue the higher integrations of thought and conduct.

2. Reduplicative Memory as expounded by Varendonck provides a useful corrective to those Group-Theories of the primitive mind which are also Group-Theories of Religion. We have noted the position of

¹ *Les Fonctions mentales*, p. 432.

the school of Durkheim that the very categories of thought are the creation of the group-consciousness or the collective representations of the tribe. The fundamental error in this is that already suggested of taking the mentality embodied in the tribe and its customs as truly primitive, and ignoring the animal and instinctive stages of human development, and those of dawning subhuman intelligence, out of which it has grown up. The categories, such as time, space, cause, and so forth, are, according to M. Durkheim, 'born in religion and of religion ; they are a product of religious thought'.¹ Religion, however, is 'eminently social. Religious representations are collective representations which express collective realities. . . .' Hence the categories must 'be social affairs and the product of collective thought'.²

In employing the category of Time as his first example, M. Durkheim makes a vague concession to an earlier form of consciousness of time, but in eager chase of his theory leaves it hurriedly without analysis.

'We cannot', he says, 'conceive of time except on condition of distinguishing its different moments. Now what is the origin of this differentiation ? Undoubtedly, the states of consciousness which we have already experienced can be reproduced in us in the same order in which they passed in the first place.'

This, we may remark, is exactly the operation of reduplicative memory.

'But howsoever important this distinction may be for our private experience, it is far from being enough to constitute the notion or category of time. This does not consist merely in a commemoration, either partial or integral, of our past life. It is an abstract and impersonal frame which surrounds, not our individual existence, but that of all humanity. It is like an endless chart, where all duration is spread out before the mind,

¹ *Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, p. 9.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 10.

and upon which all possible events can be located in relation to fixed and determined guide lines.'

These guide lines are taken from social life.

'The divisions into days, weeks, months, years, &c., correspond to the periodical recurrence of rites, feasts, and public ceremonies. A calendar expresses the rhythm of the collective activities, while at the same time its function is to secure their regularity.'¹

The same theory is elaborated in greater detail and with much ingenuity by MM. Hubert and Mauss, joint contributors to *L'Année Sociologique*. Their theory of Time as a category in the primitive mind is republished in their *Mélanges d'Histoire des Religions* under the title 'The idea of Time in Religion'.² The formative notion in their system is that of the 'Sacred'. The divisions of time are defined qualitatively by their sacredness rather than, as with civilized minds, quantitatively by their duration or association with natural phenomena. Parts of time, days, weeks, and months, are distinguished by the obligatory rites or the equally obligatory 'interdictions' which give them their sacred character. 'Sacred' is equivalent to *mana*; it is the possession of *mana* which constitutes sacredness.

'It is necessary that the associations which define the qualities of time should have a sacred character . . . that the dates and signs should have a magico-religious power, and that the things signified, events or acts, should participate in the nature of that power.'

This magico-religious power is *mana*. The notion of the sacred constituted by it 'cannot be formed in the mind of an individual as such; it results from subjective experiences of the group'.³

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 10-11.

² *Mélanges d'Histoire des Religions* (Félix Alcan, Paris, 1909).

³ *Op. cit.*, p. 220.

The last sentence gives the point at which we join issue with this school. The point is the part played by the group in creating the primitive mentality, as contrasted with the part taken by individual thought, or better, by universal tendencies in the minds of all primitives as incipiently thinking beings. If the 'sacred' for primitive man as distinguished from the 'profane' arises from his sense of Mana, magico-religious power, in things, as these writers rightly hold, it appears to us that this sense of mysterious power in phenomena, this attribution of a composite quality like power-life-will to things unfamiliar and therefore feared, would naturally arise in the individual mind quite apart from the influence of the group. The modern savage at the fetichistic stage may make an individual fetich of any odd thing which may happen to impress him, through some purely personal association or experience or other, as possessing this power or Mana. It is matter of general agreement that this vague ascription of magico-religious power to things is, through the development of tribal life and thought, filled in like a rude sketch with the religious rites and ideas of the group, until it is the rich and colourful picture of tribal religion, magic, and law; but the *sketch* is individual. This tendency to see unseen and probably dangerous power in strange or unfamiliar things or events might be called a category of the primitive mind; for it is universal, and gives its 'form' to the matter of all experience of that character; but it is, nevertheless, simply a development of a tendency which primitive man shares with the animals, to see power either to hurt or help in everything, and to act upon the perception. The difference from the animals is made above all by man's acquisition of the new co-ordinating activity of imagination, which adds, to the instinctively sensed or intelligently perceived power in things, its visualizations, image-concepts, and growing

ideas of unseen and intangible power or powers, which may be either illusions or profound realities.

The most conspicuous joint in the harness of the Group-Theory is the confusion between 'category' and 'idea' with respect to time, space, class, and so on. There is, for instance, no difficulty in granting to MM. Hubert and Mauss the truth of this statement: 'To sum up, the work of abstraction from which the notion of time, objective, quantitative and abstract, has proceeded, is perhaps the consequence of that which has detached from things time qualitative and semi-concrete.' Or again that 'in brief, the calendar is the order of the periodicity of rites. Its history teaches, on the other hand, that it is the code of the qualities of time.'¹ This means, what few have ever questioned, though it is stated by these writers in a vivid and learned way, that the content of the notion or idea of time for savage man at the tribal stage, is provided by the most important periodical events of the tribal life, which are always religious in character. But to say that the category of time is of social and religious origin is quite a different statement. From the anthropological point of view, the category of time is the tendency of the mind to arrange events, and to visualize them, in the order in which they have occurred in the past, and are expected to occur in the future. The organ of this tendency is Reduplicative Memory, which records and recalls events in their chronological order. The tendency cannot be said to have a social or religious origin or to be the creation of the tribe or group, as the school of Durkheim maintain. For the category of time, as a form for the matter of experience, is, like Reduplicative Memory, possessed in common by the higher animals and man; and was undoubtedly exercised before there were tribes with periodical religious rites and calendars. On the other hand, it is equally

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 228-9.

true that the *idea*, the notion, the 'représentation', the concept, of time has climbed up from poverty to wealth of meaning, from concreteness to abstraction, from duration to eternity, by a stairway whose steps have been constituted mainly by the religious thought and practice of man in society.

It is probably unnecessary to show in detail how the same confusion of category and idea enables this school to hold that the other categories are of religious, that is, of social origin. One may simply say that there is something distinctly grotesque in the impression M. Durkheim makes that in his view the category of Class, and the power of classification, are derived from the actual existence of phratries and clans in the primitive societies. It seems so obvious that the category of Class is the tendency which man shares with the animals to set things together in the mind on the ground of sameness, the tendency to unify experience, which is present in perception and advances to conception, the concept, and abstract ideas. But, naturally, the *idea* or concept of Class would take for tribal man the meaning given to it by the only group phenomena he knows and their more or less sacred associations. Similarly, MM. Hubert and Mauss may say that for primitive man 'spaces are always veritable temples',¹ and M. Durkheim may justly affirm that 'there are societies in Australia and North America where space is conceived in the form of an immense circle, because the camp has a circular form; and this spatial circle is divided up exactly like the tribal circle, and is in its image', and so forth; but as M. Durkheim himself says, 'spatial representation consists essentially in a primary co-ordination of the data of sensuous experience',² and the category of Space had already been for long operative in the animal mind as well as in the human,

¹ *Op. cit.*, Preface, p. xxxi.

² *Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, pp. 11-12.

in co-ordinating sense-experience in terms of distance, nearness, and relative position.

This contention that the categories, such as time, space, class, and causality, are not the creation of the tribal mind on the basis of its customs, but are part of the equipment of the individual mind even in the animal and subhuman stage of man's development, is admirably confirmed by the nature of Reduplicative Memory. There is given in its exact photographic record, and, when need arises, equally exact reproduction, of the phenomena of experience, a picture of things and events in the order of time, relations of space, and even causal connexions of antecedent and consequent, in which they actually occurred. As Varendonck says, reduplicative memory 'may be used as a basis for the knowledge of causal, temporal and spatial relations throughout the animal scale. This result is attained by a regression, the mind ascending from the terminal image of the series to the initial one.'¹ From this nature of reduplicative memory we regard it as established that the categories—in the sense we give them of tendencies of the mind to arrange the phenomena of experience in relations temporal, spatial, causal, and the like—are present in the animal mind and in the mind of man just beyond the instinctive, animal stage, in its earliest and simplest integrations such as its ordinary perceptions.

¹ *Evolution of the Conscious Faculties*, p. 51.

XIII

THE FORMATION OF PRIMITIVE CONCEPTS

(c) UNIFICATION AND DISCRIMINATION

PROGRESS in human thought from Perception to Conception is an advance both in unification and in discrimination of the phenomena of experience. Primitive thought is lacking in both, because it is only as things are comprehended, that is, grasped all round, that they are clearly distinguished from each other. The difference between the exact and definite concepts of civilized and especially of scientific man, and the fluid, indefinite, interpenetrating concepts of the primitive mind, is like that between a handful of finely cut diamonds and the gleaming jewels of a wave-crest breaking in the sun. In tracing this important difference we may refer again to Dr. Varendonck's distinction between Reduplicative and Synthetical Memory. The function of the latter is to form syntheses on the ground of sameness between the newly presented facts of experience, and those of the past which are recorded in the mind, and reproduced on stimulus, by reduplicative memory. It may be doubted whether the name 'memory' is appropriate for this synthetical operation of thought; for it is rather the characteristic synthetizing or integrating activity of the mind as a whole, employing for its unifications the material supplied by memory. Sully names the same function, Constructive Imagination. The point, however, is that this synthetic activity produces a percept by the unification of a present sense-impression with sensations revived from memory, and creates concepts by unifications of a more complex character. We have traced in a general

way the evolution of sensation into perception and towards conception as far as the Image-Concept. We may now particularize a little more.

One important point is that the process is evidently one of increasing internal control, of grasp upon the phenomena by the co-ordinating mind itself; and progress is towards mental unities which are ever more highly integrated and finely differentiated. Thus, the unification corresponding to the pure sensation is the instinctive reflex, in which there may be no mental control whatever. In perception the stimulus comes from the external world still, but there is a pause in which the material from without is co-ordinated with sensations of the past held in reduplicative memory and revived from it. There is selective action according to sameness, and the resulting unity is a perceived thing. With the growth of the brain and the development of 'eyemindedness', perception becomes more and more visual, and revived perceptions are also largely visual, that is, in image forms. The higher animal, in so far as he thinks, as when he is faced with an obstacle, with some new thing or with alternative courses of action, probably thinks in images: he *sees* the thing as a composite picture constructed out of the present image-percept together with recalled image-percepts, and tending, through the characteristic unifying activity of the mind, to become a definite and coherent image. Or, when it is a question of action, he sees himself in a kind of cinematographic film, pursuing one or other course of action—a visualization of the self which is of much importance in the evolution of individuality, self-consciousness, and the idea of the soul.

An illustration of the development we are outlining may be taken from lower animal life. The opinion of farmers that rooks distinguish between a man with a gun and a man without one, seems fairly well established. They disregard the one, but take flight at the appear-

ance of the other. In the one case, the image-percept, composed of present and past perceptions, takes the form of the (naturally) wordless picture, 'man in field, harmless', and the crow continues his operations. In the other, the image-percept assumes the more complex and differentiated form of the picture, 'man in field with gun, dangerous', and this touches the spring for flight. The combined process of unification and discrimination is manifest here. In the latter case, moreover, one observes the image-percept merging gradually into the image-concept; and it becomes clear that the difference between the two is one of degree and of development, the image-concept being merely richer in content, more differentiated, and at the same time more widely comprehensive in the grasp of its integration.

The next stage is the Word-Concept; and here we are in the human sphere. The spoken word implies society: it is the means of communication. The earliest animal form of communication was no doubt gesture; and many primitives have a very complete gesture language to eke out the vocal. A very primitive form of word is found in what the German ethnologists call 'lautbilder', sound-pictures, which M. Lévy-Bruhl names vocal gestures. These are adverbial or interjectional forms, which are 'a sort of pictures or reproductions of what one wishes to express, obtained by means of the voice'.¹ Words in general in early languages have this pictorial character, and are at first representative of image-concepts. Many modern abstract terms are hidden metaphors from which the image of a concrete thing has vanished. In the well-known example of the word 'spirit', the concrete image embedded in *spiritus*, *anima*, *psyche*, *ruach*, is 'breath-thing' or 'wind-thing'. The progress of words towards abstract meanings is achieved by the passing

¹ *Les Fonctions mentales*, p. 183.

away of the application to a particular concrete thing, the fading out of the image which attaches it to a restricted class of things, and the reduction of the word to a sign, which, by its generality, covers an immensely increased range of the phenomena of experience. We come thus at the summit to the general idea or abstract notion.

The advance just outlined implies a growth of mind in the power of unification, with its parallel activity of discrimination. In the primitive mind, in which the co-ordinative centres and powers are not well developed, the general idea, like the 'portmanteau' word containing a great many things packed in orderly fashion, is, in the natural state of the savage, impossible. He thinks largely in images, by finding likenesses to concrete things, and his concepts are mainly image-concepts. The unifying activity of his mind is supremely Imagination. For this reason, the attachment of his thought to the concrete does not mean that he cannot conceive of the invisible and intangible. On the contrary, he adds a whole world imaginatively conceived, and hence invisible and intangible, to the world of sensible experience. This is the truth in M. Lévy-Bruhl's view that the whole outlook of primitive man is *mystique*, that is, determined by 'belief in forces, influences and activities imperceptible to the senses but nevertheless real'.¹ That this unseen and intangible world of savage man, however, is the creation of imagination, and even is in great part imaginary and illusory, does not foreclose the possibility that this universal tendency in the primitive mind may be making toward the truth of things, and may be a tentative grasp with an imperfect instrument upon a world which, though unseen, is yet real. The imagination at its highest in civilized man is a sublime organ of truth for the poet, the philosopher, and even the man of science; and the values and powers which it grasps in its swift, flashing integrations—the

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 39.

subtler forces conceived by science, truth itself, goodness, and the inward essence of beauty—belong more and more, it seems, to a world which is invisible and yet real if anything is. If one is to interpret the beginning by the end in the evolutionary order, and not the end by the beginning, it would appear that this tendency in man, in becoming human, to add a world of unseen powers, beings and values to the world of his sense-experience, is the 'spark' which 'disturbs our clod', or the raw, green blade, otherwise unmeaning, which is making towards the full, ripe corn of our wisest comprehension of reality.

In pursuing the development of the Concept out of more elementary forms, it may be useful to trace the history of a particular conception such as that of 'power'. This for us is at once a very comprehensive and yet definite general idea. To man, then, as an animal at the instinctive stage, 'power' comes as a sense-impression in the mind, of some concrete, external thing which impinges upon a sense and may call forth the response of a reflexive movement. As a percept, 'power', let us say in a thing seen, is a perception of movement or action or a tendency to action: the object is doing or about to do something which is a concern of the perceiving subject. The image of a moving patch of jungle, for example, is co-ordinated with past similar perceptions, and the further image takes, in the mind of the watching savage, the shape of a deer which has 'power' to feed him, or of a tiger which has 'power' to kill. Though it is here still upon the plane of merely animal intelligence, the primitive mind discriminates; thus the cause of the movement of the reeds is not the wind, and it is a deer and not a tiger. There may be appropriate action under the impulse of desire or fear, namely, pursuit or flight.

The case is different when, at the definitely human stage, there is perception of 'power' which escapes

from the co-ordinations of instinct and animal intelligence, and refuses to coalesce with images of 'power' already in memory from past experience. In other words, it is unknown 'power', unfamiliar, strange, and therefore usually feared. But the unification must go on, and imagination assumes the task. Under the influence of uneasiness arising from inability to 'place' the phenomenon, and of the instinctive fear of the unknown, the 'power' is imaged as dangerous. The next step is to co-ordinate the unknown 'power' with known things, by extending sameness to likeness. For instance, the unknown, mysterious 'power' is *like life*: its action resembles that of living things. A Bushman who saw a cart for the first time regarded it as a living animal, and spoke of a hand-cart accompanying it, as the child or calf of the large one. Similarly, in Australia the sacred totemic stones, representing a male and female kangaroo in the rites intended to increase the supply of the food-animal, have smaller stones around them, which are treated by the natives as the young to which the large stones have given birth. The magical or sacred power attributed to these inanimate objects is thus thought of under the image of life. Thus 'power' becomes the image-concept 'like-life'. This tendency to see life in unfamiliar, inanimate things, is probably universal at an early stage of man's mental development. It is that pre-animistic state of the primitive view of the world, which Dr. Marett, with general acceptance, has called Animatism.

Or again, 'power' in things, especially in the strange, mysterious or sacred, may present itself to the primitive mind as *like will*, under the image of will. Not that the savage has even the vaguest idea of 'will' as a faculty of persons or things; but he may regard even inanimate objects, which impress him as having power, strange or unfamiliar things, or familiar things to which for the nonce he ascribes unusual or heightened power, as able

like a living or conscious being to wish to do or not to do something which he believes to be in its power. Thus when the Australian aborigine prays to his knife to go and kill the man who has stolen his wife, he is ascribing to the weapon a power which is conscious—hears, for instance, what he asks—and which may wish to do or not to do what he desires, that is, a power which is of the nature of will.

The savage mind, however, not yet having developed the capacity for exact discrimination even among its images, cannot keep these image-concepts of ‘power’, namely, ‘like-life’ and ‘like-will’, separate and distinct: they overlap and mingle with each other. Hence primitive man often forms a composite image-concept, in which he represents the impressively powerful thing as both like life and like will. It is then a composite mental representation in the form of life-power-will. But this is what we have already suggested to be the essence of that mental attitude which anthropologists now describe as belief in Mana. This word derived (first by Prof. Codrington) from Melanesian magic, has its counterparts in many languages in widely separated parts of the world; and the idea it represents, of a mysterious potency, which carries with it almost invariably associations of life and volition, is probably the generalized form from which both Magic and Religion have evolved.

Of this conception of Mana it has been said by MM. Hubert and Mauss, who have analysed it with great learning and acuteness, that ‘it is at one and the same time’ the notion of ‘a power, a cause, a force, a quality, a substance, an atmosphere. . . . It is applied to the rites, actors, materials and spirits of magic as well as those of religion.’¹ They find this idea under different names among the American Indians like the Algonquins and the Sioux, in Mexico, in India (under

¹ *Op. cit.*, Preface, p. xix.

the Vedic conception of *brahman*), and among many tribes in Africa. 'From the major premise which is mana there is deduced, by a logical and psychological necessity, the conclusion which is soul and myth.'¹

We have attempted, as these authors do not, to give an account of the psychological process by which the primitive mind has arrived at even this generalized notion of Mana. We may add, in advancing to show how this inchoate germ of religion developed into its higher forms, that Mana may remain, for minds which are capable of little more, at the stage of the image-concept, as the ascription of a life-and-will potency to things and persons which give an impression of power, especially of mysterious power. This is the essence of that truly primitive type of rudimentary religion known as Fetichism, so much so that MM. Hubert and Mauss conclude that it is necessary to replace for the whole of Africa the notion of fetich by that of Mana.² Fetichism, of which the purest examples are to be found among West African Negroes, curiously appears as a reversion to type in civilized society, in the form of a half-serious belief in luck, charms, amulets, and mascots. On the other hand, let the primitive mind develop in mental power, that is, in power of co-ordination and discrimination, and Mana passes out of the category of an image-concept. It acquires both deeper integration and richer differentiation, becomes more unified and distinct, losing its vagueness and its wavering, changing outline, and emerges into something which can be called a concept, such as the idea of spirit or soul, from which, by way of Animism, all religions may be said to be derived.

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. xxxvi-xxxvii.

² *Op. cit.*, p. xx.

XIV

PRIMITIVE CONCEPTS AND PRIMITIVE RELIGION

(a) ANIMISM

THE whole effort of the human spirit we have defined as the Quest for Unity. The endeavour of man, both on the theoretical and the practical side of his life, is directed towards making a whole of it, achieving a harmony within himself and at the same time in relation to his environment, including his fellows and 'whatever gods there be'. The growth of mind is a growth in the power of integration, of the capacity to co-ordinate the material of experience into more and more comprehensive and also finely discriminated wholes for thought. This is a power which, as just seen, is absent or severely limited in savage man. What Dr. Marett says of the morality of primitive man is true of his thinking: it is impressionistic.¹ His ideas are not distinct; they melt into each other. The difference between his concepts and those of the cultivated man is like that between a wide, shallow, unbanked, primitive river and a modern stream, confined, deep, and regulated.

Primitive concepts, when escaping from the stage of the image-concept, are thus vague, fluid, and diffusive. This may be illustrated from animal life, it being premised that 'concept' is here used in its widest sense. It may be asked why it is that a kitten pursues and stalks a moving string, while the adult cat treats it with indifference. The reason is that the kitten's 'concept' of living things and the possibly eatable, is

¹ *Anthropology*, p. 239.

wide, diffused, and vague, and includes practically all moving things ; while the cat's ' concept ' of what is living and possibly eatable is much more limited and distinct, excluding innumerable moving things. In precisely the same way, primitive man's concept of what is living is wide, diffused, and vague, and tends to include everything that moves. It is this fluidity of the concept we call ' life ', so that for the savage it sprawls over all moving things, which enables Sir E. B. Tylor to speak of the primitive idea of a ' general animation of nature ', or of a ' doctrine of universal vitality '. These phrases are too definite to describe the earliest stages of man's thought on its way to religion. Tylor, indeed, one of the great pioneers of this subject, made the splendid generalization known as Animism, and claimed that it covered all the essential facts of the origin of religion from the point of view of anthropology. Later investigation, illuminated at many points by his theory, has naturally provided material for criticism and modification of Tylor's view.

The main criticism is that the earlier theory of Animism identifies savage man's ascription of life to moving things with the ascription to them of ' spirit '. Primitive man, it is thought, ascribes to all animate beings, and to some inanimate things, soul like his own. But later observers, particularly of the phenomena of Fetichism, established that savage man does not necessarily regard his fetich as the abode of spirit or as possessed by spirit : there may be nothing in the fetich for him but an idea of power or something even so vague as luck. Animatism, the tendency to see life or something analogous to it in all things around him, is certainly nearer to the primitive than Animism, which belongs to a higher level of human thought, where man, having acquired greater mental powers of co-ordination and discrimination, has arrived at a certain distinction between matter and spirit, and has

formed some idea of soul apart from body. As Prof. Hopkins of Yale says :

‘There can be no clear understanding of the foundation of religion without the recognition of the fact that man has passed through a stage where he fails to discriminate between matter and spirit. Before a belief in freed spirits is possible, man must be able to abstract spirit from body. But, in the thought of the lowest savage, matter and spiritual power are so interrelated that there is no body without conscious power and no spirit without body. Even in comparatively high religions, such as that of the Vedic poets, plough and drum are conscious volitive powers, as much as the sun and other phenomena expressing active thought and will. Samoyeds and Finns worship objects without recognition of spirit detached from a natural basis. Some African tribes to-day are unable to distinguish between matter and spirit.’ As to the lowest savage, he adds, ‘The object to which his vague mumblings of hope and fear are directed is neither god nor devil nor a power of any sort as a person ; it is rather the potency called *mana* or *orenda*.’¹

Spirit, then, as distinguished from body or from an object which it inhabits, enters, or leaves, is one of those concepts of which the earliest type of human mind was hardly capable, and which came later in the story of religion. There is a point at which it does come in, through the analogy of dreams, reflected images and the like, and with man’s more and more distinct self-consciousness ; and the theory of Animism has its rightful place as a description of a great class of religious phenomena at that stage of human development. But behind Animism and even Fetichism there is something more general, more rudimentary, a generalized form of belief of which these, and all higher types of religion, may be regarded as more complex, later developments. To recur to the natural parallel, there is a generalized form of the human body, belonging to the prehuman period of man’s evolution, sharing

¹ *The History of Religions*, pp. 17-18.

many characters of the apes along with some that are human such as the erect position and the opposable thumb, while the human future is represented largely by tendencies in the generalized mind which went with that primitive bodily frame. The powers in that generalized primitive mind, in their turn, were mainly those held in common with the animals, powers which we term instinctive as contrasted with those of intelligence, which latter was present also in rudimentary forms, and in tendencies waiting, as it were, for the immense future which should unfold them, to declare and illustrate their nature and meaning.

In like manner, and as a consequence of what has just been described, Religion also goes back to a generalized form. On the analogy of the evolution of body and mind, one would expect primitive man to share the non-religious animal mind with certain tendencies towards religion which his vast religious future would unfold and interpret. The expectation is confirmed by the facts. The springs of the great river of religion can be traced back to a point at which they become invisible. The first observable germinal form of religion is the dim sense of a 'life' like his own, a 'power' like his own, a 'will' like his own, in things outside himself—image-concepts which we have seen to be necessarily earlier than the animistic stage of thought, in which the more definite and comparatively highly developed concept of 'soul' or 'spirit' comes into play. The most that can be said of the objects of religious exercises at this stage, which might equally be called magical exercises, is that to the savage the thing seems living, hears, for instance, when he speaks to it, can do things beyond what he himself can do, and has will, that is, can do things if it likes, when requested by prayer, compelled by magic or spell, or induced by gifts.

This is the most generalized and primitive form of religion we are ever likely to discover. It only deserves

the name of religion as the almost shapeless seed is called by the name of the noble tree or the delicate flower into which it grows. All over the world, however, among the most backward races, may be found this crude and shifting notion of mysterious agency, or a life-potency in things which is different from and greater than the man himself. It may be reasonably asserted that, at the stage of man's religious development prior to the emergence of the idea of soul, before he acquired the capacity to distinguish clearly between animate and inanimate and between matter and spirit, this rudimentary conception known conveniently as Mana, with its three probably constant constituents of life, power, and will in the objects of his reverence, was the universal form which the religious tendency took in the mind of primitive man.

The next stage was Animism, the belief in souls or spirits as distinguishable from material objects and phenomena. Progress towards it is made along the line of the growth of such concepts as life, power, and will, in definiteness and distinctness from their material embodiments. This implies probably increase in brain-power, especially in the co-ordinating centres, through some favourable mutation in the race itself or crossing with some larger-brained race, and an improvement as a result in the mental power of unification and discrimination. The gradual integration of man's own self-consciousness, the growth of his individuality, his sense of being a person, all, however elementary, contribute to the personalizing, so to say, of these living potencies into sentient beings. Dreams, visualizing dead persons whose bodies have vanished, help on the idea of the existence of parents, friends, ancestors, as beings apart from body. Thence arrived the conception of spirits, usually evil and dangerous because mysterious, regarded as more or less separate existences inhabiting or associated with things, places, and persons,

and more and more enjoying a superhuman freedom, because, like people in visions of the night, they are independent of body, space, and time.

This process of the evolution of Animism may be traced (following Prof. E. Washburn Hopkins)¹ from low to higher stages through the beliefs of certain African tribes. The lower types of West African negro are at the fetichistic level where the distinction between animate and inanimate or between matter and spirit is vague and wavering, and where there is no definite idea of a spirit or god inhabiting the fetich or in any way conceived separately from it. The object is treated as possessing in some dim sense life, potency, and volition. The Bushmen, farther south, are little beyond this stage, regarding the sun and moon as spirits in the sense that they move and therefore have life. The Bantus, who are more intelligent, have a more definite idea of soul: 'ancestral souls are revered and even thanked for blessings and feared as illness-bringers.' Still the conception is very vague: 'the soul may be left about anywhere.' The Hottentot, who is partly Bantu in race, marks a slightly higher stage. His pastoral conditions and more developed family life suggest to him moral qualities such as kindness, which he attributes to the spirits; and he has some real gods. The agricultural Wakamba Bantus have 'a vague belief in a great spirit'. The natives of Dahomey who have a well-developed social organization with a supreme head in the monarchy, are correspondingly advanced in their religious conceptions. While among the neighbouring Fanti people, who are at the totemistic and animistic stage, 'each community has its own separate power or spirit, in Dahomey these similar powers or spirits of the separate communities have coalesced into one, withal one having power and dignity commensurate with his physical

¹ *The History of Religions*, pp. 25 ff.

expansion.' This last observation of Prof. Hopkins leads him to a further remark of special interest. 'One sees how intimate is the connexion here between religion and the social group. The bigger the state, the bigger the god compounded of various gods : the bigger the god's province, the less local, confined, his activity. His comprehensiveness tends to make him more abstract.'¹

The connexion here indicated between man's social state and his religious belief is of some importance. There is a historical example of it in the Biblical history of the Jewish people, where there are action and reaction between their gradual achievement of national unity, on the one hand, and their gradually acquired monotheism, on the other. Similarly, the conversion of the Anglo-Saxon tribes in England to the one faith of Christianity, was a strong force in welding them into one nation. The unifications of the inner and outer life of man thus act and react upon each other. This is observable in his earlier types of organization and simpler beliefs with which we are now concerned. Glancing back, accordingly, over the account just given of these African peoples, one notes how, at the restless hunting or collecting stage represented by the Bushman, religion is of an impulsive, changeful, and unreflective character. At this point it is no more than a sense of superhuman power in an object which somehow, by strangeness, terror, luck or curious association of some kind, has struck the savage's imagination. The object has something akin to life, to potency, to volition ; it does things he cannot do himself. This is the mental attitude of Fetichism.

With a more settled life at the early stages of nomadism and agriculture, and with the advance of intelligence above the lowest, there is leisure for reflection ; man's sense of individuality grows over against the

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 29.

animals he governs, the plant life he controls, and the objects he creates with his hands; and so a new unification, the concept of spirit or soul separate from things, becomes possible, and he is at the stage, with all its varying degrees, of Animism. In the more intelligent peoples, with the increased organization of life at the later nomadic and agricultural stages, with progress in the integration of thought and morals, there is exaltation of the spirits into gods. Miss Jane Harrison, as already hinted, traces convincingly, through the various rites of the ancient Greeks connected with the Spring sacrifice of a bull, the emergence of the Bull-God Dionysos, who from being a mere fertility-power or fertility-spirit among a half-savage agricultural people, grew, with the growing refinement of the imagination and intellect of the classical Greeks, into the god Dionysos, round whose ritual and great annual festival the wonderful dramas of Greece came to be written and performed.¹ In a state of tribal and still more of national unity, as in a monarchical society even of the barbarous type of Dahomey, the gods are organized into a hierarchy, and a sovereign god, a Zeus or Jupiter, a Marduk or indeed a Yahweh, becomes conceivable.

It is not intended to convey the impression that in our view these particular beliefs always correspond to these particular stages in social culture. That theory would instantly receive its quietus from the consideration that such primitive peoples as the Australian aborigines, without flocks and herds and without agriculture, have spirits and gods, in their worship, of some definiteness, and certain of them possess a vague conception of a supreme spirit. But in general this position is based on fact. The savage of the hunting or collecting stage, whose thought and social life are alike of low organization, to whom a concept or general

¹ *Ancient Art and Ritual*, p. 99.

idea of any distinctness, still more an abstract notion, is very difficult or altogether impossible, is found as a rule at the religious level of belief in Mana, life potency and volition in the objects of his veneration. Reflection such as comes in nomadic pastoral and agricultural life, along with a deepening sense of man's own individuality, raises these dim powers to the status of spirits or souls separable from body, and these again, more defined and ethicized, become gods. The analogy of his own more highly organized societies is naturally reflected in the hierarchy of the gods ; and the paramount chief, the patriarch, and the priest-king assist the development of the idea of a supreme god, passing in some cases, such as the Biblical nations of Moab and Israel, through Henotheism or the national god, onward to Monotheism.

XV

PRIMITIVE CONCEPTS AND PRIMITIVE RELIGION

(b) BELIEF IN A FUTURE LIFE

THE specific character of the primitive mind with which we are concerned at present is its difficulty in forming concepts, distinct ideas, and still more, abstract conceptions. We have just sought to show how this operates in the creation of pre-animistic belief, from which proceeds, with the increase of mental integrating power, the developing idea of spirit as distinguished from body, and hence the widespread cult of Animism or Spirit-Worship, which again is developed by integration and differentiation into the higher religions. As a second example of these primitive psychological processes we take the savage's conception of the life after death.

There is little question among anthropologists as to the primitiveness of this belief. Among savages of the present day it is, in one shape or other, all but universal; and there is evidence of its existence along with the very earliest types of human life. Some burials, not only of the Upper but of the Lower Palaeolithic age, appear to indicate that men at that period buried their dead with a dim and groping faith that for them life went on in some fashion beyond the grave. There is a famous example in the youth of Neanderthal type found in one of the caves of Le Moustier in France. This case is the more striking that the race to which it belonged is now generally regarded as a species of the genus *Homo* which became extinct and formed no part of the ancestry of modern man. The skeleton in this

instance lay beneath gravel washed into the cave by some river or flood from the melting of the ice of the Glacial Period. The lad, perhaps about sixteen years of age, lay with his right arm supporting his head over a heap of wrought flints, and the left arm outstretched as though to reach with the hand a splendid *coup-de-poing*, an oval weapon of the period, while bones of the urus or wild-ox were found split open as for the marrow.¹ There can never be absolute certainty in the interpretation of such a phenomenon, and various explanations of this are given; but it appears reasonable to suppose that these accompaniments of burial were intended as food and weapons for the use of the man after the change we call death.

This is supported by the similar beliefs and practices of savages of our own time. The example we shall quote is derived from the life of the Australian natives, whom, it is interesting to note, Prof. Elliot Smith, along with other authorities, regards as of a very ancient and primitive physical type, with distinct structural affinities to Neanderthal man.² In the reminiscences of Mr. Tom Petrie, an early inhabitant of Queensland and one of Dr. A. W. Howitt's most valued correspondents,³ an account is given of a burial among the aborigines of the Brisbane district, now totally extinct. The body was placed for a time upon a platform stretched between a forked tree and some forked sticks, and

‘after this, a space in the ground underneath the body about four feet square would be cleared bare of grass, and at one side of it a small fire would be built. This was that the spirit of the dead man might come down in the night and warm himself at the fire or cook his food. If the body was that of a man, a spear or waddy would be placed ready so that the spirit might go

¹ Cf. *Anthropology*, R. R. Marett, p. 79.

² *Essays on the Evolution of Man*, G. Elliot Smith, p. 98.

³ *The Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, p. 323.

hunting in the night : if a woman, then a yam-stick took the place of the other weapon, and her spirit could also hunt, or dig for roots.'¹

It is natural that an unscientific observer should speak as this author does of the *spirit* doing these things as a separate, disembodied being ; but the probability is that the Australian native could not make the clear distinction between soul and body to which we are accustomed, and thought of the person as he had known him, vaguely compounded of body and what we call soul, changed indeed so that he does such things as hunting and eating in a different way, but certainly not acting as a disembodied spirit leaving its body on the platform while it went upon its ghostly affairs. That is too advanced an idea for minds at the stage of development of these tribes.

The common psychological element in all such burials is the idea that life goes on after the change we call death, and that it is a life similar to that which has just closed. This is in accord with the nature of the primitive mind as already described, particularly with the concrete character of its thinking and its incapacity for abstraction. Thus the most rudimentary conception of the life beyond death is indicated by the provision of food, weapons, fire and so forth, exactly as in the present existence. It is said of the very primitive Veddas of Ceylon that with them 'the religious instinct expresses itself in an unquestioning belief that the father when dead still lives, guards, and guides his family in the hunt'.² A stage slightly more advanced is found where the man's weapons are broken before they are buried with him, the notion being to make them also 'dead', so that they are certain to follow him into his new condition. The

¹ *Tom Petrie's Reminiscences of Early Queensland*, Constance G. Petrie, Brisbane, p. 31.

² *The History of Religions*, Hopkins, p. 57.

approach to Animism is seen when weapons and food intended for the dead are burned, the idea then being that the essence or soul of the things joins the spirit-essence of the dead in his new world. There is a highly developed Animism among the American Indians, in which this ethereal mirroring of the seen world by the world beyond death is brought to great perfection, as in Tylor's saying that 'if the soul of the Algonquin be equipped with the soul of his spear and of his snow-shoes, he will hunt hereafter the soul of the elk as it roams on the soul of the snow'.¹

Retracing our steps a little to scrutinize more directly the psychological elements in the primitive conception of a future life, we may recall that striking relic of Palaeolithic man, the youth of the cave of Le Moustier, so carefully provided with food and weapons for the long journey. Prof. Scott Elliot, with a vivid if perhaps extreme sentimentalism, in the following passage probably emphasizes a real element, namely that of affection, in the burial of this very primitive man :

'If one remembers the practice of many living savages, this youth's burial seems to show a real affection, as well as careful provision for his probable needs in a brighter and happier hunting-ground than his Neanderthaloid relatives ever knew, for the rich array of flint weapons means real self-sacrifice. Each flint was of real value, for it had involved a long, toilsome and irritating labour. Yet they gave him all this precious wealth out of affection and perhaps gratitude. It is, of course, purely a guess, but it has been suggested that he had lost his life when hunting the Urus and possibly after some heroic deed of daring for which his tribe revered him.'²

Such imaginative reconstructions as this of primitive situations can, naturally, only be used with great caution. For instance, there is, for savage man as we know him, a very strong ingredient of fear in all

¹ *Primitive Culture*, vol. ii, p. 75.

² *Primitive Man and His Story*, p. 152.

actions and ceremonies connected with death. Thus the burial of weapons and other possessions with the dead is dictated sometimes merely by fear of the contagion of death or of the resentment of the spirit at the assumption by others of his property. Another factor of uncertainty in estimating his feelings and emotions is that, to the observation of competent observers, savage man often appears to be as shallow in his emotions as in his thought. Mr. Charles W. Abel says of the native of Papua :

‘ It would be misleading to estimate a Papuan’s sorrow by the noise he makes in advertising it. All his emotions are shallow. His heart is limited in feeling, as his mind is restricted in thought. He can neither hate his enemy, nor love his friend, as civilized people can. He may torture and eat the one, and howl and lacerate his face with sharp stones till his blood mingles with his tears, for the loss of the other, but it is not deep feeling which prompts either action ; it is custom that demands it.’¹

It need not surprise us that the feelings and emotions of primitive man turn out on close examination to be as generalized, vague, wavering and lacking in depth or steadfastness, as his thoughts. Amongst the evidence for this is the ease with which the parental instinct is set aside, and children are sacrificed in obedience to custom. In such examples, however, we are probably faced by a phenomenon which is not strictly primitive, but which, belonging to the Tribal Integration, is the product of the tyranny of tribal custom. Within that iron integration, feelings are suppressed, affections are outraged, and cruelties perpetrated, under the influence of tribal fears and crude theories, in a way which is not to be observed at more truly primitive stages of human development. This is supported by the fact that with the break-up of the authority of tribal custom, natural affections are observed to reassert themselves, like steel springs released from pressure. The following is

¹ *Savage Life in New Guinea*, p. 41.

an example. In the neighbourhood of a Mission in Mbreshi in Central Africa, a little child began to cut a tooth in the upper jaw before the lower. The truth leaked out and the village was panic-stricken, expecting deaths from the witchcraft which possessed the child. Unfortunately, the long arm of coincidence interposed, and one or two deaths at the time confirmed the villagers in their primitive reasoning ; and the parents were ordered to destroy the infant. Influenced, however, by percolating civilized or Christian ideas, though they were not Christian, the parents resisted the demand, and the girl was allowed to live.

It is possible, therefore, to be misled in estimating the emotion and feelings of truly primitive man by what occurs under the custom of the tribe, which exercises such a despotic sway in most of the savage societies known to us. It is the distorting and warping, by tribal notions and terrors, of his more primitive tendencies, which obscure the fact that man is still of the race of the animals, among which care for the young and helpless, affection, tenderness and even self-sacrifice, have been observed as truly as the self-regarding impulses. These natural affections are not without their influence upon the primitive attitude to death ; and we shall see reason to think that the savage parts from his dead with a certain sorrow and sense of loss. It may even be said that the picture of G. F. Watts, ' Love and Death,' where the little child, Love, is seen desperately but vainly pushing back the mighty, inexorable, yet somehow kindly and tender Angel of Death crossing the threshold, has its shadowy prototypes, dimmer and less definite on the whole, the farther back one looks, through all man's history since he became human. Love thrusting back Death from the door has no doubt been a psychological factor in the creation of the belief in Immortality.

Returning to the factor of thought in the evolution

of this idea of a future life, we find at the beginning, once more, the difficulty the primitive mind has in forming distinct concepts and particularly in conceiving abstract ideas. Herbert Spencer in his *Principles of Sociology* shows how elaborate are the distinctions and minute the observations involved for the civilized mind in the idea of a species of trout, and how hard it is for the savage to form even the lowest grade of general and abstract ideas. He quotes in illustration this statement concerning some hill-tribes of India :

‘ Light is a high abstraction which none of my informants can grasp, though they readily give equivalents for sunshine and candle or fire-flame,’ and gives the statement of Spix and Martius with regard to the Indians of Brazil, that it would be in vain to seek in their language ‘ words for the abstract ideas of plant, animal, and the still more abstract notions, colour, tone, sex, species, &c. ; such a generalization of ideas is found among them only in the frequently used infinite of the verbs, to walk, to eat, to drink, to dance, to sing, to hear, &c.’ ¹

Since this incapacity for abstraction is general in the primitive mind, it becomes clear that the ideas of ‘ death ’ and ‘ life ’, and even ‘ dead ’ and ‘ living ’, familiar and concrete enough as they are to us, are highly abstract for savage man, and, at his earliest stages of development, above his mental capacity. When we speak of a person as ‘ dead ’, the state is to us something very definite, defined by innumerable concrete facts and abstract conceptions wholly beyond the knowledge and grasp of the primitive brain. Take, for example, the familiar words, ‘ the dust returns to the earth as it was ; ’ very many facts of observation and of physical science make it easy for us to call that body, though in a condition so like life and so like sleep, ‘ dust ’. And again, ‘ the spirit returns to God who gave it ’ ; a host of extremely abstract conceptions are involved in that to us simple thought, such as that of an invisible being, independent of space, of time,

¹ *Principles of Sociology*, pp. 83-4.

of body, and an unseen world of such unseen beings in a totally new environment. By the most primitive savages the condition of death can hardly be expressed by one comprehensive word, but as has just been said of the Indians of Brazil, by the frequent use of verbal forms for common actions. That is to say, the state of being dead is described by saying that the man does many things he did before, or does not do some things he did before, or does other and new things, or old things in a new way. Thus the primitive man declares that the 'dead' man still eats, drinks, walks, speaks, hunts, in his new state, and in practically the same fashion as before; and so he provides the departed with food, fire, weapons and so forth, in case he should lack them.

At the same time there is a difference. The man in his new state no longer eats and drinks with his friends; he does not hunt with the tribe; he is not seen except in dreams or in some strange, elusive manner as what we call a ghost. This difference is realized. In a true sense he is felt to have gone away, to have departed. There is doubtless a feeling of loss. In some tribes, as in the Fiji islands, there is a simple and pathetic custom whereby a savage climbs a high tree and, looking across a wide landscape, calls, mentioning the name of a dead friend, 'Come back, come back.'¹ There is a long history between this expression of a primitive mentality and the *Adonais* or *In Memoriam*, but there is a direct lineage between, and there are the same feeling of loss and the same bestowal of immortality. The North Australian natives had the custom called 'the cry for the dead'. It was the invariable practice, when a number of natives were gathered together, to herald the dawn with an outburst of crying and wailing, accompanied by cursing of the murderer of the relative named; for here, as so often

¹ Prof. Hopkins, *op. cit.*, p. 66

for the Australian and other primitive minds, there was no death from 'natural causes'. An incredible din was made, especially if there were many clans assembled for a great feast or corroboree, for ten to twenty minutes, after which the usual occupations of the day began.¹ There is thus at this early stage of thought about the future existence, a consciousness of difference and a feeling of bereavement associated with death; but there is no sharp distinction cutting off death from life. The dead go on existing, though in a different way.

The subsequent history of the conception of death follows the lines we have traced in the previous chapter, of the gradual integration of the idea of spirit or soul, while the savage distinguishes ever more clearly between his sleeping and waking life, between matter and spirit, body and soul, visible and invisible. In the emergence of the difficult concept of invisibility or intangibility as the quality of soul or spirit, we have noted the intermediary part played by the image-concept, 'like-breath' or 'like-wind', embalmed in language, as in the cognate Aryan words, Sanskrit *anila* wind, Gaelic *anam* soul, Latin *animus*, *anima*, Greek *anemos*.² Another approach to the abstract idea of invisible spirit is made through the image-concept of smallness or minuteness, perhaps because things become invisible by growing in the distance 'small by degrees and beautifully less', until they vanish altogether. Thus a primitive idea of soul is that of the miniature soul or 'mannikin', as Frazer styles it, a tiny replica of the bodily shape.

'The Malays conceive of the human soul as a little man, mostly invisible and of the bigness of the thumb, who corresponds exactly in shape, proportion, and even in complexion to the man in whose body he resides. This mannikin is of a thin unsubstan-

¹ *Tom Petrie's Reminiscences*, pp. 12-13.

² *Survivals in Belief among the Celts*, G. Henderson, (Maclehose, Glasgow), p. 48.

tial nature, . . . and it can flit quickly from place to place ; it is temporarily absent from the body in sleep, trance, and disease, and permanently absent after death.' ¹

The same tendency to arrive at abstract conceptions of spirit through concrete image-forms, appears in the idea of the animal-soul, usually pictured as a small animal able to creep out in the form of a bee or lizard from the mouth during sleep or trance, and to creep back again if life is to go on. One fashion of imagining the diffusiveness of spirit, which means ultimately its independence of space, is the not infrequent idea of plurality of souls. 'The Caribs supposed that there was one soul in the head, another in the heart, and other souls at all the places where an artery is felt to be pulsating.' ² The closeness of the idea of the invisible entity to the material image and embodiment, is obvious here. Another image-concept for diffusiveness or superiority to space is secured by endowing the soul-creature with wings. The soul is then imagined to take the form of a butterfly, a moth, a bee, and frequently of a bird. ³ The representation of personal spirits with wings, in the higher religions such as Judaism and Christianity, is an extension and exaltation of the image-concept of flight, in order to express the idea of spirits which, as such, are independent of space and time. These various image-concepts, still adhering to concrete images, which in different minds and races were variously dominant, were the breaking chrysalis from which the anthropomorphic concept of spirit finally emerged. This was attained with the growth of man's power of unification and distinction, and with his increasingly definite sense of his own personality, aided by dreams in which he saw himself and others as personal beings. Thence the complex conception of spirit as like himself but intangible, breath-

¹ *The Golden Bough* (Abridged Edition), p. 179. ² *Op. Cit.* p. 690.

³ *Survivals in Belief among the Celts*, Ch. II, The Wanderings of Psyche.

like, and for the most part invisible, took shape in the primitive mind. It is unnecessary to trace the process farther, since to believe in the existence of such invisible, intangible spirits to which space, time, and substance seem irrelevant, is to believe in a future life.

In concluding this chapter we may remark that it may seem at the first blush as if we had tracked man's belief in a future life back to a mere negative, to an inability, an incapacity of distinguishing between the living and the dead or forming the concepts of death and life. The beginnings, however, are not the same as the cause; nor are the rudimentary forms the originating force. In the background of this study we place frankly our theistic and Christian philosophy, which maintains that at the formless beginnings of the universe there is not merely the moving nebula but also God, and that God's way of clothing the lilies is by growth and wonderful transformation from the all but shapeless root down in the black earth. From this standpoint at least we perceive that even our apparent negative is but the reverse side of a positive, namely, that behind the inability to achieve the first distinct concepts, there is the ineradicable impulse to form concepts. And, indeed, there is behind it all, the unconquerable effort on man's part, as sharing in the tide-flow of the universe towards integration and differentiation, to attain unity in himself and in his world. In other terms, there is here the endeavour of man to make his life complete, to reach full 'self-realization', which is the spark of the divine in the human and accounts for all man's progress. From this point of view, also, it is that the striking impression is gained of the immense spectacle of men in all ages from primeval times, with most rare exceptions, clinging to belief in a world beyond this, and often following their dead into the mists which hide that world, not without love and hope.

XVI

THE REASONING OF PRIMITIVE MAN

A. ITS SEMI-INSTINCTIVE CHARACTER

(a) TABOO: THE FREUDIAN THEORY

THE mind of primitive man is 'generalized' mind. Even as definitely human, it is greatly influenced by the instincts and instinctive feelings which it shares with the lower animals. At the same time it possesses intelligence, that higher correlating power which many of the animals also have, but which has in it the promise of the finest achievements of cultivated thought. The advance of mind from the predominantly instinctive animal stage to the stage at which these achievements are possible, is one of evolution from less to greater unification of the contents of mind, with correspondingly increasing differentiation. There is simultaneously progressive development in those powers of the mind, powers of unification and discrimination, by which more and more coherent and distinct wholes in thought are created. The simplest mental integration is the simple reflex, which is not absent from the experience of civilized man, but plays a much greater part in the life of the savage. We have seen this rudimentary integration increasingly superseded by the richer and more discriminated totalities of intelligent perception. Then followed the image-concept, more comprehensive, gathering a number of perceptions of similar character into a whole which is *inwardly* perceived. Finally in the concept, the difference between the primitive mind and the cultivated is even more clearly illustrated. The concepts of the savage are few and rare in accordance with the primitive character of his mind: at the same time they are less comprehen-

sive, less distinct, more fluid and uncertain in outline, than even the simpler concepts of civilized man, while more general and abstract ideas elude him altogether. We have just endeavoured to show how this difficulty in forming concepts affects the character of the religion of primitive man.

As might be expected, similar phenomena and a parallel evolution are observable in relation to the still higher and more complex integrations of thought, namely, judgement and reasoning. Here once more the salient difference between the primitive and the civilized mind lies in the former's deficiency in the power of integration, the faculty of grasping the elements of experience and uniting them by certain common strands of meaning into more or less coherent and discriminated wholes for thought. The mental deficiency is correlative with the fact that, in the early type of brain, the frontal region of the cortex, in which the co-ordinative power is chiefly located, is not well-developed. When, accordingly, it is a question not of the forming of a concept but of forming a judgement or coming to a reasoned conclusion about the phenomena of his sense perceptions, there is the same lack of capacity to make the connexions or to make them accurately. Thus, for example, in the important relation of Causality, connexions among phenomena are supposed which have no basis in fact, as between the moon and lunacy or childbirth, between whistling and storms of wind, sprinkling of water and the coming of rain; and innumerable other relations are imagined, and embodied in elaborate practices of Magic and Religion, which the more integrative and discriminative, critical, power of later-developed reason proves to be no relations at all. In this as in other respects the mind of the savage is near to the instinctive level of animal development, and carries with it into the new, tentative integrations of his growing intelligence, naturally

and influentially, some of the characteristics of mind at that earlier stage. It may be useful, therefore, in our discussion of the inference and reasoning of primitive man, and in the description of the savage theories and customs based on them, to follow the main lines of the analysis of the primitive mind already given, and arrange the subject-matter as follows :

A. Primitive Reasoning : its Semi-instinctive Character.

B. Its Imperfect Co-ordinations.

C. Fatigue or Weariness of Mental Effort.

At the stage of human development when man is emerging out of the integration of instinct into that of intelligence, the part played in the cultured mind by reasoned thought is taken by feeling or emotion. The crude reasoning of primitive man is immensely influenced by his fears, on the one hand, and by his desires or hopes, on the other.

‘Mental evolution’, says Herbert Spencer, ‘both intellectual and emotional may be measured by the degree of remoteness from primitive reflex action. The formation of sudden, irreversible conclusions on the slenderest evidence is less distant from reflex action than is the formation of deliberate and modifiable conclusions after much evidence has been collected.’¹

The progress of early man thus begins with the instinctive animal stage, at which such impulses as fear or desire operate in the manner of a nervous reflex with almost no pause for thought, the creature leaping away from what it fears or towards what it desires, without considering much where its leap is to end. The next stage is where the rudimentary intelligence, exercising its incipient reasoning power, but still under the influence of crude fear or desire, leaps with almost the same suddenness and impulsiveness at conclusions, without seeing clearly where the mental leap is to end, and so arriving at numberless erratic and mistaken inferences.

¹ *Principles of Sociology*, p. 54.

It is instructive to remind ourselves of the very great influence upon civilized minds of feeling, especially of fear and desire, thrusting reason aside, in social custom such as fashion, in superstition like that of mascots and amulets, in the sophistications and 'rationalizing' which enable humane and cultivated men to justify slavery and child labour to themselves, in fear of loss and desire of gain. With these familiar mental and moral facts in mind, we may return to observe the same traits in the prehuman ancestor. Dominating his mentality there are the impulses of Fear and Desire actuating his movements of flight or approach. They operate mainly through instinctive reflexes, that is, the instantaneous or swift response of nerve and muscle to an impulse from the brain created by the perception of some feared or desired thing—and this without the intervention of what can be called reflective thinking. Thought soon enters in, however, even in the case of the animals, and with the development of the ape-man's brain there is more and more pause for reflection, for discrimination among things, and for crude, perceived connexions between causes and effects. Dependent as early man increasingly becomes on his brain for survival, and with a growing imagination to supplement perception, Fear and Desire, especially Fear, make quietude and pause for reflection and discrimination at first very difficult; and so the suddenness of instinctive reflexes and movements is reproduced in the impulsiveness of his judgements and the rash leaps of his reasoning, but, naturally, without the accuracy of racial habit and the practical inerrancy of instinct.

Perhaps man's first considerable conquest in the new realm of intelligence came when, instead of merely doing things instinctively, he *saw* himself doing things, and even making choice among things he might do. Thence arrived the rudimentary idea of *power*. Things

around him *did* things. Here his vast ignorance came in, and he saw *mysterious* power or potency in innumerable phenomena. But his life was still actuated by the emotions of Fear and Desire, supremely by Fear, as, having descended from the trees, he found himself in a hostile world, with only his brain to help him. To man in that situation mysterious power was generally dangerous; and he must be on his guard against it, avoid it, coerce it, conciliate it. On the other hand, some things were not dangerous but helpful to him: their Mana, their mysterious potency, as, for instance, in the food animals, or medicinal plants, was of assistance to his desires. Thus he came to a two-fold classification of things having strange, impressive power, into those having power to hurt, mysteriously perilous, answering to his fears, on the one hand, and those having power to help, on the other, corresponding to his desires or hopes. This distinction is important, for it brings us to a junction or fork from which the two lines of primitive man's psychology run, for the most part divergently, into the country of his moral and religious life. Along one line, that of mysterious power to hurt, we come to Taboo with its implications and developments, and also the nefarious side of Magic, as in Witchcraft and Sorcery: along the other, that of power to help, to Magic on its good side, to Spell and Prayer, and ultimately to the forms and ideas of the higher religions.

Taboo, as an idea, a practice, or an institution, is the creation of fear, and, in its most generalized forms, might be defined as the varied means taken by primitive man to ward off mysterious, dangerous power from doing him harm, or to use the same dangerous power as an inhibition to his fellows. These means, and the manifold shapes assumed by Taboo, are the result of the crude reasoning of the savage mind under the influence of semi-instinctive fear. Before proceeding

to state a general theory of Taboo as the product of primitive inference, we may glance at a hypothesis which ascribes it to a less general and more restricted origin. It is the theory of Dr. Freud of psycho-analytic fame; and it is adopted by Miss Jane Harrison in her *Epilegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*.¹ We shall refer to Dr. Freud's book, *Totem and Taboo*,² but shall quote mainly from Miss Harrison's conveniently condensed account.

On this view, Taboo originates in primitive sex-relationships. It is essentially interwoven with totemism and exogamy. The theory is almost crucially dependent on a particular hypothesis, based (insecurely) upon a hint of Darwin's, concerning the earliest form of human society. The 'primal family' says Miss Harrison,

'consisted of an adult male, one or more females and their children. . . . So long as the children are young all is well, and if all the children were females, no difficulty would arise. The father simply marries his daughters as he married their mother. There is no "natural" repulsion against incest. . . . It is when the young male offspring grow up to maturity that trouble begins. The single oldest or strongest dominant male is confronted by his sons as rivals. . . . If he is to keep his wives to himself he must kill these rivals or expel them. His rule is—no other male to touch the females of his camp, the result—expulsion of adolescent sons, i. e. exogamy. It seems an *impasse*. Perpetual expulsion of all the young forces of the family. In time it is true the young males may and do conquer, the father grows old and weak, the sons band together and slay him, but it is only themselves to retail the old hideous story of sexual jealousy. Advance in civilization is forbidden, for co-operation is impossible. But there were other forces at work. The mother counted for something, the young males were to her not merely as to their father, young males; they were sons. The higher quadrupeds have longer infancy and this would foster

¹ *Epilegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* (University Press, Cambridge, 1921).

² *Totem and Taboo* (Routledge, London, 1919).

affection even in the father. . . . Moreover, man *is* a social animal and his brain is highly developed, he must have vaguely hungered after peace and consequent plenty, killing your sons would pall after a time. The next step, *the* crucial step, the beginning of all our morality, was taken—man began to impose tabus, and thereby arrived at a sort of social contract. *Tabu* is never an artificial strengthening of an instinctive repulsion, it cuts clean across individual desire. It is easy to see what was the nature of the first tabu. It was made in the interests of the father. Weary at last of the expulsion and slaying of sons . . . he made terms with them on the basis of a tabu. You may stay at home on condition that you do not touch my wives or at least certain of my wives; your mother and your sisters or some of them are to you tabu. And if tabu they must be marked as such, they must carry on their bodies a totem badge or mark of avoidance. . . . The primal cardinal fact is that totemism consists in group distinction, that it functions through tabu, and that it takes its rise in perhaps the strongest or at least the fiercest of human impulses in sex jealousy.’¹

The length of this quotation may be justified if it makes clear, as we cannot but think it does, the extreme artificiality of the theory as a whole and at many points. It is odd that so philosophic an observer as Miss Harrison should not have been warned off a social contract theory of taboo by the classical example of Rousseau. Things do not happen in that way in the process of evolution. One cannot escape the impression that she is thinking of just one primal family in which this supposed drama occurs. But can one visualize, as surely one must, a host of such families or hordes, scattered over a wide area of the earth, in which the father grown weary of killing his sons, or the sons of killing the father, proposed and accepted the arrangement suggested as the first form of taboo? We may remark in passing that the explanation of totemism as originating in badges or marks of avoidance, is wholly inadequate. Dr. Freud himself conveys the same impression of dealing with one single primal family,

¹ *Epilegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, pp. 8-9.

and in fact with one single deed, the murder of the primal father, which, as the origin of the sense of guilt in the sons, plays a part in his system curiously resembling the dogma of the Fall of Man and Original Sin in orthodox theology. For example, he says: 'One day the expelled brothers joined forces, slew and ate the father, and thus put an end to the father horde.'¹ We confess to finding this quite unintelligible. Was the 'father horde' one old male with his wives and daughters? In that case, why call it a 'horde'? The alternative of an assemblage of old males plus their wives is too absurd to be entertained. Was there a 'son horde', consisting of expelled bachelors over against the 'father horde'? And what does 'one day' mean? 'Of course these cannibalistic savages ate their victim.'² Anthropologists would say that there is no 'of course' in the matter. Cannibalism is neither inevitable nor universal amongst the lowest races known to us. It appears, indeed, to be more common at levels of culture higher than the lowest, and is undoubtedly often the product of sophistication or crude reasoning, the idea being to acquire the strength of the enemy or the qualities of the parent. And if the old male gorilla with his family is taken as the prototype of the human family, as is done by both Miss Harrison and Dr. Freud, it is disconcerting that the gorilla feeds chiefly on vegetable diet, and is probably as seldom cannibalistic as civilized man. Yet the factor of the sons devouring the father is very necessary for the Freudian theory of totemism, in which the totem which is ceremonially killed and eaten, is the 'surrogate' of the primal father.³

The idea that the earliest form of human society was of the gorilla type, is a postulate of the Freudian theory of totemism and taboo;⁴ but the evidence

¹ *Totem and Taboo*, p. 234.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 245.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 234.

⁴ *Totem and Taboo*, p. 234.

for it is of the slenderest. Since Darwin made the suggestion, which Dr. Freud calls a 'Darwinian hypothesis', the discovery of extremely ancient types of men who combine distinct anthropoid characters with very human brains, has emphasized the gap between earliest man and the modern anthropoid apes. Hence deductions from their forms of society to those of primitive man are so precarious as to be valueless. Even on the assumption of this primal form of human society, the explanation of exogamy as the result of the driving away of the young males by the father, is not convincing. There is little evidence for such a situation having ever existed, as little as for the banding together of the sons to slay the father. The explanation also ignores other alternatives, such as the fact that the mating impulse is not all and only on one, the male, side. On the analogy of other animals, not to speak of woman in modern society, the young females could hardly have been prevented from escaping from the 'old male' and seeking younger and more attractive companions. As we have already suggested in our earlier discussion of exogamy, the powerful human impulse of curiosity and interest in the new and unfamiliar, would facilitate this tendency.¹ It would reinforce the almost instinctive tendency to outbreeding, which we believe represents in man nature's preference for cross-fertilization in the interests of greater variability, and which becomes conscious in what Dr. Freud calls 'the savage's dread of incest'. In the process the jealousy of the old male would be one, but not by any means the only, factor.

A further point is raised by the following statement which Dr. Freud makes with that frankness of his which is so disarming :

'The Darwinian conception of the primal horde does not, of course, allow for the beginning of totemism. There is only

¹ Cf. Chapter VI, pp. 63-4.

a violent, jealous father who keeps all the females for himself and drives away the growing sons. This primal state of society has nowhere been observed. The most primitive organization we know, which to-day is still in force with certain tribes, is *associations of men* consisting of members with equal rights, subject to the restrictions of the totemic system, and founded on matriarchy, or descent through the mother.¹

This theory has indeed to meet the formidable objection that, as Dr. Freud here admits, the most primitive known societies are matriarchal in character, and that in these the role played by the father is far from being supreme. The motive of jealousy, also, which in the Freudian system is all-important, appears to be extremely weak in many of the most primitive tribes we know. Among the Australian clans observed by Dr. Howitt, exchange of wives is a rather common form of courtesy;² and among other savage races, resentment against wife-stealing or elopement seems to arise not from sexual jealousy, but from the sense of an outrage upon private property. The compensation thus usually takes the form of some other kind of property.

The jealousy-motive, however, is supremely necessary for Dr. Freud's theory. In truth the present writer is unable to avoid the impression that *Totem and Taboo* is largely a tractate in the interests of the familiar dogma of the 'Oedipus-complex', the supposedly universal desire of the son for his father's wife or wives, and the 'death-wish' to kill him in order to gain possession. It is no part of our purpose in this study to discuss the Freudian system in general, in which there are elements of permanent value. We simply point out that the theory of taboo in the Freudian school, particularly its crucial postulate of the primal family, is from the anthropological point of view extremely doubtful, and that many of the

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 234-5.

² Howitt, *Op. cit.* (Pirraura wives), p. 181, (Exchange) p. 195.

genuine facts are allegorized ingeniously in order to fit into the hypothesis. Taboo has a much more generalized character in its earliest forms than is given to it in the Freudian hypothesis; and its application to the phenomena and relationships of sex is only a specific case, though certainly an important one, of its more general meaning and application which we are about to describe.

XVII

THE REASONING OF PRIMITIVE MAN

A. ITS SEMI-INSTINCTIVE CHARACTER

(b) TABOO : A GENERAL THEORY

ACCORDING to Prof. Hopkins, 'Taboo (Samoan *tapu*, Hawaiian *kapu*) is a tab or mark indicating that a thing is not *noa* or common, but set apart for private use'.¹ This is its most restricted sense. The great specialists in Taboo are the Polynesian races, but it occurs everywhere. The Polynesian may indicate that a particular fruit-tree is his private property by tying a rag to it, or a chief may declare his claim to a piece of land by having strips of cloth attached to bushes on the land : the tree or ground is then taboo to every one but its owner. M. Letourneau mentions that to the Eskimo a stranded whale, a walrus, or even a bear, is the property of the whole clan ; but he has a right to consider his own as much driftwood as, unaided, he can drag up beyond the reach of the tide. 'In this case', he adds, 'a stone placed upon the piece of wood is enough to guarantee the right of private property.'² The stone is here the sign of a taboo or reservation. But, behind these signs, trifling in themselves, there must be some meaning, some power, some 'sanction', which causes them to be respected ; and the sanction, as might be surmised, is that of *fear*. The savage believes that something very terrible, generally death, will happen to him, if he disregards the taboo.

The use of Taboo, however, to indicate and protect

¹ *History of Religions*, p. 67.

² *Property, its Origin and Development*, p. 54.

private property, is a specific application of it. Taboos are as numerous as the fears of primitive man and are to be found wherever he senses mysterious, that is to say, dangerous, power. In *Tom Petrie's Reminiscences* it is told that as a boy marching in the bush along with some Brisbane aborigines, he observed a half-fallen tree leaning across the track. They were walking in Indian file, and the leader stopped at the place, pulled up a bush from the wayside, and laid it upon the path some distance short of the leaning tree. He then walked round instead of under the tree, and each man following did the same. The resemblance of this to the modern fear of ill-luck from walking under a ladder is manifest. The explanation of the fear, both in the savage and in the modern, may be the natural animal fear that the unstable, half-falling thing in the jungle might fall and crush one, an instinctive reflex, in fact, which the crude reasoning of earliest intelligence turns into terror of mysterious power to hurt. On Petrie's inquiring why they went round the tree, the savages said that if a man went under it, his body would swell up and he would die, and that the bush was laid down as a warning.¹

There are two points worth remarking in connexion with this incident. The first is that the bush laid down as a taboo was a form of sign language and picture writing, a primitive bill saying 'Trespassers will be prosecuted', with silent mention of grim penalties. These same Australian natives sent messengers with a notched stick, which was understood by the tribe which received it as an invitation to bring their boys to a great 'kippa' or joint ceremony of initiation into manhood.² It may seem to us no difficult step—though these Australians and countless other savages never made it—from such signs to primitive picture writing, like that of some Red

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 14 ff.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 50.

Indians, from which in more cultured peoples hieroglyphs and modern writing developed. In such cases the apparently obvious step, simple to the cultivated mind, is never taken through many generations, because the co-ordinative power of the mind and the unifying capacity of the brain corresponding to it, are not sufficiently developed to make the advance possible. The sign of the bush, at any rate, was for these Queensland savages a true taboo, warning of the danger of mysterious power.

A second point, which is of interest for the further light it throws into the recesses of the primitive mind, emerges in the continuation of the narrative just quoted. Tom Petrie, 'boylike, wished to show that there was nothing in all this, and walked assuredly under the tree, drawing attention to the fact that he didn't die. "Oh, but you are white," they said.'¹ This explanation was doubtless perfectly satisfying to these natives, and enabled them to keep their superstition undisturbed. There is a modern example of the same type of reasoning in Mark Twain's *Tom Sawyer*. It is a book in which he purposely incorporates many superstitions of children and slaves in the southwestern states of America. In this case a superstition of Tom's had disappointed him, and a trusted incantation had failed. He was puzzled and distressed until it suddenly occurred to him that some 'witch had interfered and broken the charm'.² This solution of the problem was accepted as wholly satisfactory. Many examples of precisely this primitive form of reasoning are given by M. Lévy-Bruhl, of which the following is representative :

"When a native", writes Du Chaillu, "has an iron collar on his neck, he is proof against bullets. Should the charm not succeed, his faith is not shaken. He will conclude that a clever

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 14.

² *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (Nelson), pp. 70-1.

and malevolent sorcerer has produced a 'counter-charm' of a powerful character of which the wounded man is the victim." ¹

This is what M. Lévy-Bruhl names 'imperméabilité à l'expérience', and is one of the traits which he adduces as proving that the mind of primitive man is different in kind from the modern civilized mind. We have seen, however, the same mode of reasoning in Mark Twain's modern boy; and imperviousness to experience is familiar enough wherever people of any period envelop themselves with the armour of prejudice, like the armadillo in his bony case. One prefers to say that these are instances of the lack of co-ordinating power in the primitive brain. Subtle connexions among phenomena, and grasp of general principles which envelop them, are impossible to mind at this stage; and sudden impulsive leaps of thought are made with the speed of the instinctive reflex, but without the accuracy of instinct. Relations of cause and effect are supposed between phenomena which are not causally connected in reality; and a simple, uncritical, loosely integrated judgement is adopted, because reasoning of a more deeply integrated and finely discriminated character is impossible to this primitive type of thought.

It is round the great mysteries of life that the largest number of taboos cluster. What primitive man does not understand, while yet it forces itself upon his notice, he fears: the mysterious thing has power to hurt, and if not properly managed will hurt. Taboo is his endeavour to manage the thing, in the form mainly of avoiding or warding off its dangers. From this point of view it has justly been called Negative Magic; for Magic is essentially man's endeavour to manage dangerous power for his own ends of safety or achievement. Taboos, therefore, are closely associated with the mysterious events in life, namely,

¹ *Les Fonctions mentales*, p. 62.

birth, adolescence, marriage, death, and, when religion is sufficiently developed, the events and figures of religion.

1. Birth gives the primitive mind the impression of mysterious power which; in the first instance, man fears and regards as dangerous. Accordingly, both mother and child are surrounded with taboos. The regulations in the Old Testament book of Leviticus concerning the seclusion of women after child-birth, have behind them this primitive inference from mysterious power to peril. In general, wherever the word 'unclean' occurs in the old law, one can trace a primitive taboo, the origin of which is sometimes clear and sometimes obscure. But it is to be remembered that the taboos are not in their crude original state. By the time of the Levitical and even the Deuteronomic Law, they have been subjected to a somewhat civilized intelligence informed by a high type of religion; so that when we see them, though they retain something of their crudeness and unreason embalmed in custom, these primitive ideas of 'uncleanness' or incomprehensible and contagious peril, are in process of 'sublimation', of being exalted into considerations of health or moral purity or simple common sense. It is, in fact, important to observe in connexion with all these matters that this process of sublimation is always going on wherever there is any progress in intelligence and culture, and is constantly tending to come into play, as the expression of the fundamental urge towards unification in nature and in life, even in the least progressive of races. This accounts for the permanence of customs, which, had their only meaning continued to be that of a taboo originating in primeval ignorance and fear, would have been discarded. For example, the twelfth chapter of Leviticus enjoins a sacrifice on the part of a mother for her cleansing, and even as an atonement for her sin.¹ The need for such cleansing or atonement, as

¹ Lev. xii, especially vv. 6-7.

though childbirth involved uncleanness or even sin, or, in the more primitive idea, contagious or infectious peril to those around, naturally does not appeal to the modern mind. But one can see the custom undergo sublimation in the second chapter of Luke, where the sacrifice on the part of Mary, the mother of Jesus, of a pair of doves, is probably regarded as not for herself or in atonement, but as an acknowledgement that her child belongs, as the first-born, to God ;¹ and there gleams through the passage the loftier and yet homelier idea that the babe is a gift from God and that thanksgiving is due to Him.

That the idea of mysterious and therefore perilous power is the tap-root of Birth-taboos, is confirmed by its survival in relation to animals. In North Aberdeenshire, persons now living have seen a cow, when it left the byre for the first time after having calved, being compelled to step over a burning peat with salt on it. Perhaps the same notion of purification accounts also for the custom of driving the cattle at Midsummer through the Beltane fires. In the former instance, at all events, the double agency of fire and salt, two great purifiers in savage rite and practice all over the world, is invoked to ensure that the strange and perilous power of this mysterious thing, Birth, shall not injure people by its infection or contagion. In the case of the child, the same inference from power to peril gives rise to many taboos. It is not uncommon in Scotland to find a decided dislike, on the part of mothers of the less educated class, to taking an infant out of doors before it has been baptized. They cannot explain it ; and, though they may imagine it to portend some harm to the child, it is more probable that originally the fear was of harm to the tribe, from the mysterious power hanging about the new-born. It would seem that the primitive origin of infant-

¹ Luke ii, 22, ' present him to the Lord.'

baptism is the lustration or ceremonial cleansing of the child from that dangerous influence, before it is allowed free contact with society. The natives of Guinea significantly baptize both mother and child. Aztecs, Mayas, Peruvians, Cherokees, and other American races have or had the same rite. To the horrified surprise of the early Roman Catholic missionaries these people spoke of child-baptism as a 'new-birth'.

Baptism thus passes through various stages of development, from its pre-animistic form of cleansing from vague power or Mana dangerous to the tribe, through the animistic theory of possession by evil spirits which must be driven away by symbolic cleansing or incantation or by holy water, onward to the theological dogma of original sin, which—after the manner of the American Indians—must be washed away by a baptismal regeneration. This latter dogma, still formally at least maintained over a great part of the Christian Church, has by this time certainly shed the cold ferocity of Augustinian logic, with its hell for unbaptized infants and the *limbus infantum* of Arnobius; but it would have surprised the patristic, medieval, and later theologians; to discover that much of the passion with which they defended Baptismal Regeneration, and of the apparently resistless force of their logic concerning it, was derived from a deep, almost instinctive prejudice, which came to them from savage ancestors and out of the primitive fear of the mystery of Birth; and yet this may very well have been true. To disconnect Christian Baptism of any sort from early and still surviving superstitions, as also from harsh theological dogmas, and even to see its origin in primeval lustrations and fear of mysterious potencies, need not detract from its value as a Christian rite. The question is whether it is capable of sublimation, of losing its ancient and crude meanings in a lofty spiritual significance.

2. Adult Baptism is of interest as related to taboos concerning Adolescence. The change from childhood to manhood and womanhood means an acquisition of powers mysterious to the savage, sexual powers involving strange excitements and ecstasies, and equally strange and even terrifying lassitudes and feelings of weakness; hence they are dangerous powers. The various initiation ceremonies which are found almost everywhere and are often most elaborate—the rites in Australia may last six months—are designed in the first instance to ward off from injuring the tribe, these terrible potencies, and in the second place to secure their beneficence to the tribe and to the individual himself. Purification is a natural way of escaping the perilous infections, and an obvious and therefore common method of purification is by ceremonial washing with water—like being for the primitive mind the cause of like, the outward purity creating the inward. A natural advance of the same idea is to blood as the agent of the catharsis or purifying; for blood is more mysterious and *therefore* more potent than water. Hence the wide prevalence of lustrations of adolescents and initiates, including the water-cleansings and the blood-bath or *taurobolium* of the Greek and Roman mystery religions. The strength in popular evangelism of the metaphor, adopted and spiritualized from these mysteries by the author of the Apocalypse, ‘washed in the blood of the Lamb’, and the cognate expressions, is derived from this primitive notion of the cleansing efficacy of blood.

The mention of the Apocalypse recalls that other striking metaphor which is of frequent occurrence in the Johannine writings, that of the New Birth. The influence of the mystery religions, or of the ideas diffused by them through the early Christian age, is probably to be found here also; and it is interesting to note that, not only in the Greek and Roman mys-

teries, but in the initiation rites of many savage tribes in different parts of the world, the change at puberty is dealt with as a new or second birth. It is, moreover, an easy transition in thought from a new-birth to a resurrection and new commencement of life, after a symbolized death in which the old life or the former state is cut off as drastically as possible. Sir James Frazer gives many curious examples of the ritual expression of these ideas either separately or in combination. There is a dramatic representation of the birth of the youth from the mother as near to actuality as possible, or of the killing of the youths in the house of initiation, with the accompaniment of fearful screams, and spears drenched in blood, and their reappearance in the weakness and ignorance of life, of new-born babes or very young children.¹ The common element in these rites of initiation of the adolescent into adult life, under such dramatic forms as a new birth or a dying in order to live again, is that they are essentially elaborations of Taboo. They are designed to cope with the mysterious powers which come with sexual maturity, and which, being incomprehensible, though they are felt to be beneficent both to the individual and the tribe, are still fraught with peril to both. The taboo is against the uninitiated, the young children and the women, who are protected from the dangerous Mana of the youth by his seclusion, and by their being warned off by solemn prohibitions and severe penalties. It is, for instance, death for a woman even only to look upon the sacred 'bull-roarer' whose moaning or thunderous sound announces the proceeding of the mysteries. The taboo is also upon the youth, who is protected from the danger to himself of these strange new powers, on the one hand by gradual initiation into their use, with instruction, as their savage and childish minds conceive it, by his elders

¹ *The Golden Bough* vol. iii, p. 442. Cf. Abridged Edition, pp. 696-7.

concerning their nature, and on the other hand, by rites performed upon himself, such as circumcision or tattooing, intended to control these powers for good and to enhance them. The taboo is finally upon the tribe or community which institutes these ceremonies, and carries them through with such solemnity and care, because it feels the need of defending itself from any evil infection or contagion which might be associated with powers so impressive and beyond understanding, and against any misuse or misdirection of them.

3. Taboos connected with Marriage have at their source the same crude inference, under the influence of fear of the unknown, from mystery and power to peril; and Taboo, here also, is the manifold endeavour so to manage that mysterious potency that it shall not hurt. One of the writers of the able book on *Taboo and Genetics* puts forward the interesting view that the attitude of the savage to woman may be described in terms of the Freudian psychology, as that of an *ambivalence* of desire and disgust.¹ Woman is the object of his most powerful desire, but also the cause of that satiation, lassitude, and feeling of weakness to which the savage, with his lack of restraint and absorption in matters of sex, is specially exposed. This is an admirable explanation of the numberless taboos which forbid sexual intercourse before commencing any enterprise requiring strength, alertness, and skill, such as a hunting, fishing, or warlike expedition. The same debilitating influence is regarded as attaching to anything belonging to the person of the woman, which might be associated with her sex-power. Thus, among the Sema Nagas of Assam, whose word *genna* means taboo, 'it is strictly *genna* for men to put on or in any way use a woman's petticoat that has once been worn. To do so would destroy all chance of success in war or hunting. It is equally *genna* to beat a house

¹ *Taboo and Genetics*, p. 140.

with a petticoat, which has the same result on its inmates.'¹ It is the like fear of sex-power which makes it taboo for a woman among some Australian tribes to step over the body of a man asleep on the ground ; her husband may kill her for this offence.

The most remarkable of taboos connected with marriage is that called Exogamy which we have already discussed.² It may simply be mentioned now as the most striking example of semi-instinctive inference or reasoning, under the influence of a strong and very general repugnance to the marriage of persons closely akin. Celibacy, especially of priests and other religious specialists, is demanded by the same idea that marriage is invested with dangerous power. The inferences do not always take the same direction. Thus among the Todas, that strange fragment of a tribe in the Nilgiri Hills of India, the whole occupation is a primitive kind of dairy farming ; and their religion consists of a dairy ritual. The Toda priest, who is the 'dairyman *in excelsis*', is surrounded by innumerable taboos, one of which is that he must be celibate. The taboos mean that he is possessed of dangerous powers which by mere infection might destroy the tribe ; and one of the possible perils is cut off when marriage is forbidden. On the other hand, in later forms, as in Christian asceticism, the fear is not so much of the power to injure others which marriage might bring to the priest, as of the harm it might do himself. The original primitive fear of mysterious potency in sex has been refined at this point by highly sophisticated reasoning, through the antithesis of body and soul, matter and spirit, into the patristic and medieval idea of the body, the flesh, and indeed all matter, as corrupt and corrupting. There is something quaint, and perhaps monitory to still

¹ *The Sema Nagas*, J. H. Hutton (Macmillan, 1921), p. 18.

² See Chapter VI.

later logicians, in this lurking, behind the triumphant logic of the scholastics, of the naked savage with his crude inferences from the idea of mysterious force touched and impassioned by fear.

4. The taboos which concern Death have the same origin. When the animistic stage of belief is reached, the fear is of the ghost or spirit; and the taboos are intended to ward off the harm it may do. The countless funerary regulations which are designed to prevent the return of the spirit when the body is in the grave, are the product of the simple reasoning of primitive man on the problem of how to avert the peril which haunts the mysterious and terrible event of death. This accounts for the universal custom in Scotland of carrying the corpse out to burial *feet-first*, and for the building of cairns as substitutionary tombs, as well as the practice, of all periods and in all quarters of the globe, of presenting to the departed, or burying with him; such gifts as may make him at home and contented in the abode of shades. Similarly, there is a very widespread taboo on the mention of the name of a dead person. In New Guinea he is always referred to as 'Naniwa', 'What's-his-name', or 'Nobody'.¹ The source of this taboo is probably the fear that even to speak the name would be taken advantage of by the spirit as a call to return. Generally, though not universally, this is regarded as objectionable; and the feeling survives in the modern fear of haunted houses, churchyards at night, and ghosts in general.

Before the animistic stage of belief, however, there is traceable the more primitive and simpler inference that like may cause like, and that death has a mysterious contagion, the power to bring forth death. An animal instinct which makes the dead crow a good scarecrow, that is to say, which makes the animal flee from the

¹ *Savage Life in New Guinea*, Chas. W. Abel, p. 89.

corpse of one of its own kind, is what might be called an instinctive inference, expressing itself in a reflex impulse of fear that what has killed it may kill you. The survival value of this instinctive fear and taboo of dead things, an unreflective inference, if one may so speak, from death to peril of death, is evident enough. In later and more reflective times or minds, the semi-instinctive taboo took such forms as the ceremonial uncleanness of any one, particularly a priest, according to Jewish law, who had touched a corpse.¹ It was this, perhaps, or the analogous fear of blood, which made the priest and the Levite in the parable (the story is no doubt true to the customs of the time) pass by on the other side. The wounded man might be dead for all they knew. It is a curious probability that the wearing of mourning—whether black, as with us, or white, as with the Romans, does not matter if it is conspicuous—was thus primitively a danger-signal, a warning to society or the tribe that the relatives had upon them the perilous contagion of death. Dr. George Henderson, writing of the Highlands of Scotland, says: ‘It is forbidden for a young lad or a young woman to sweep out the room in which a corpse has been. This should be done by a woman who is past child-bearing. The idea is that the influence of death is about and may endanger the potency of the developing life.’² Experience of contagious diseases, when the observation could not—at any rate by more developed minds—be escaped, that those who touched the dying or dead man, and those in contact with *them*, died, would confirm the general conclusion of the contagious peril of the last enemy. All such taboos, like taboo in general, originate in the fear of mysterious power, taking the form of the inference that like is the cause of like, death therefore a cause of death.

¹ Numbers, xix. 11–22.

² *Survivals in Belief among the Celts* (Maclehose, 1911), p. 292.

XVIII

THE REASONING OF PRIMITIVE MAN

A. ITS SEMI-INSTINCTIVE CHARACTER

(c) THE FURTHER PSYCHOLOGY OF TABOO

Sacrifice and Law.

- I. **T**HE fundamental nature of Taboo, as essentially the effort to cope with mysterious and therefore dangerous power, may best be illustrated by reference to its most important religious embodiment, namely, Sacrifice. There have been many theories of the origin and nature of Sacrifice. For Tylor the typical sacrifice was the offering of a gift; for Frazer it was the ritual murder of the chief, the priest-king; for Robertson Smith its original form and idea are to be found in the common meal between the god and his worshippers, with totemistic associations closely interwoven. In none of these, however, is there sufficient generality to reveal the common element in all sacrificial rites. The endeavour to penetrate to that essential element in all sacrifice has been made, with success, by MM. Hubert and Mauss of the French School of M. Durkheim. These two authors declare that the process of sacrifice consists 'in establishing a communication between the sacred world and the profane world by the intermediary of a victim, that is to say, by a consecrated thing destroyed in the course of the ceremony'.¹ The nerve of this definition is the distinction between the 'sacred' and the 'profane'. It is a distinction upon which M. Durkheim and the contributors to *L'Année Sociologique* laid great stress.

¹ *Mélanges d'Histoire des Religions*, Hubert et Mauss (Alcan, Paris, 1909), p. 124.

M. Durkheim, indeed, has pushed the contrast too far. He declares, for example, that 'their heterogeneity is absolute', that they have 'always and everywhere been conceived by the human mind as two distinct classes, as two worlds between which there is nothing in common.'¹ There is 'an abyss between'.² This is an over-emphasis, for the savage mind is not capable of such exact discriminations, and the line between is so faint and wavering that for the Australian native his throwing-stick is sacred, while his spear which is thrown by it is profane; and the West African negro may beat his fetich, or discard it as having lost its mystic power. Yet the distinction is a very useful one, as the particular instance of the theory of sacrifice will show.

MM. Hubert and Mauss appear to regard the Sacred as identical with Mana, which they have investigated with great accuracy. For them, sacred things from the point of view of the savage are those which are invested with mysterious and consequently dangerous power. His religious world is constituted by these sacred things, and is pervaded by, charged with, this incalculable force. Sacrifice is the chief method of approach to that world, which is otherwise taboo to him.

'It is quite certain that sacrifice always implies a consecration; and in all sacrifice an object passes from the common domain into the religious; it is consecrated.'³ 'The sacrifice is a religious act which can only be accomplished in a religious milieu and by the medium of essentially religious agencies. Now, in general, before the ceremony, neither the sacrificer, nor the officiant, nor the place, nor the instruments, nor the victim, has this (religious or sacred) character in a satisfactory degree. The first phase of the sacrifice is designed to give them this character. They are profane; that state must be changed. For the purpose rites are necessary which introduce them into the sacred world and involve them

¹ *Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, pp. 38-9.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 61-2.

³ *Mélanges*, pp. 9-10.

in it more or less deeply according to the importance of the role which they have afterwards to play. This is what constitutes, according to the very expression of the Sanskrit texts, the *entry into the sacrifice*.¹

The 'entry into the sacrifice' is a passage from the world of the profane into the realm of the sacred or the divine, a realm whose atmosphere is electric, whose every object is charged with power which is profoundly dangerous to those who are not prepared for it, or, as it were, insulated from it. The initial rites of the sacrifice, therefore, are true *rites de passage*: their object is to bring the sacrificer, the priest who officiates, and the victim, by a gradual approach through ceremonies of purification and consecration, out of their 'profane' condition into that world of sacred and divine powers, contact with which otherwise would be disastrous. Thus the sacrificer in the ancient Hindu rites undergoes elaborate forms of purification, shaving of the head, a bath of lustration, new linen clothes, and finally a curious symbolization of a new birth by simulating the foetus in the womb, before he is in a condition safely to perform the rite.² The intermediation of a priest as officiant between the giver of the sacrifice and the sacred world, is itself a mode of separation between that world and the profane, while the regulations in the Old Testament for the purity of the priest in approaching the sacrifice, are typical of the measures taken everywhere to fit the celebrant for contact with the sacred world and to preserve him from its perilous power.³ Finally, the victim enters the sacred world by a series of purifications—separations, cleansings, anointings, and the like—culminating in its death which is the crowning act of severance from the secular world. 'By this destruction, the essential act of the sacrifice was accomplished.

¹ *Mélanges*, p. 23.

³ Lev. viii. 6 f., &c.

² *Op. cit.*, pp. 24-5.

The victim was definitely separated from the profane world; it was *consecrated*, it was *sacrificed*, in the etymological sense of the word, and different languages call the act which put it into that state, *sanctification*.¹

From the point of view from which we are observing the psychology of ritual sacrifice, namely, as involving the essence of taboo, which is an adjustment to the fear of mysterious, dangerous power, it is interesting to note, under the guidance of MM. Hubert and Mauss, how, as the victim is more and more absorbed into the sacred and divine world, it becomes the object of an increasing awe and terror. Thus in the Hindu ritual, as the end approaches, conciliatory speeches are made to the animal, with the view of averting its vengeance after its death; just as the Ainos of Japan make an appealing oration to the bear which they are about to send as a messenger to the spirit world.² At the instant of sacrifice, 'the sacred character which it (the victim) is in process of acquiring is already such that the Brahmin cannot touch it with his hands, and that the sacrificer himself hesitates to approach. He needs to be invited and encouraged by a special formula which the priest addresses to him.'³ After the slaying of the victim, finally, a strange panic often falls upon those who performed it. It makes the impression upon them of being in some sort a crime. 'At Athens, the priest of the sacrifice of the Bouphonia threw away his axe and fled.'⁴

Thus, of the three participants in the sacrifice, the offerer of it, the priest who performs it, and the victim, the last, which is 'far ben' as the Scotch say, most deeply entered, into the world of the sacred, nearest to the gods, is the most fully charged, saturated,

¹ *Mélanges*, p. 50.

² Frazer, *The Golden Bough* (Abridged Edition), pp. 509-10.

³ *Mélanges*, p. 43.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 47. Cf. *The Golden Bough*, p. 510.

with that mystic power which achieves certain benefits for those concerned, but carries with it so much of peril. It is indeed the value and efficacy of the sacrifice, to more primitive minds at least, that the victim by its mediation enables the human participants to remain at a safe distance from the divine powers, while securing that contact and *rapprochement* upon which the desired benefits depend. As MM. Hubert and Mauss point out, the savage finds in these approaches to the divine the 'very source of his life'; but the extreme caution of the approach is accounted for by the destructive effects of the rite.

'If the religious forces are the very principle of the vital forces, in themselves, they are of such a nature that their contact is dangerous to the ordinary person. Above all, when they reach a certain degree of intensity, they cannot be concentrated in a profane object without destroying it. The sacrificer, whatever may be his need, can, therefore, only approach them with the most extreme caution. That is why he introduces between them and himself intermediaries of which the victim is the chief. If he engaged in the rite to the very end by himself, he would find in it not life but death. The victim takes his place. It alone penetrates into the dangerous sphere of the sacrifice, it succumbs, and it is there in order to succumb. The sacrificer remains secure; the gods take it instead of taking him. *It redeems him.*'¹

Having entered by the rites of the sacrifice into the world of the sacred, both the celebrants and the victim have become charged with the sacredness of that world; and the nature of that sacredness for the primitive mind as essentially saturation with dangerous power, could not be better demonstrated than by the difficulty all of them, especially the human participants, find in returning to the world of the profane. The rites of exit (*sortie*) from the sacrifice, in other words, of outgoing from the sacred world, are thus only second in importance to the rites of entry into it.

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 125.

All sacrifices even of the simplest character, as the authors under notice finely show, include the two processes of 'sacralization' and 'desacralization', consecration and deconsecration.¹ The sacred objects and persons must be ritually divested of their perilous sacredness before they can enter into the profane, ordinary world without bringing harm upon the people and things in it. The victim is most easily dealt with, as it is generally destroyed, the careful disposal of the remains being often all that is necessary. The offerer of the sacrifice and the priest are rendered capable of sharing in mundane affairs by purifications resembling those by which they entered into the sphere of the sacred. Thus, after Aaron had sacrificed the goat of the sin-offering and sent the scapegoat away into the wilderness, he had to put off the linen garments he had worn and wash himself, while the man who let the scapegoat go must bathe before he returned to the camp.²

The process of 'desacralization' or deconsecration throws further light upon the nature of Taboo when it is seen to apply to other types of sacredness than that of the sacrifice. To escape from the state of consecration into contact with the 'profane', that is, the ordinary, world, without harm ensuing, demands careful measures, which themselves often include a sacrifice.

'The Nazarite at Jerusalem was a perfectly pure being ; he was consecrated to Jahweh by a vow in consequence of which he abstained from wine and did not cut his hair. He must keep himself free from all defilement. But, once arrived at the conclusion of his vow, he can only disengage himself from it by a sacrifice.'³

The Nazarite therefore takes a bath of purification, and offers various sacrifices. Similarly, a quite definite

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 122.

² Lev. xvi. 23, 24, 26.

³ *Op. cit.*, p. 78.

sacredness frequently attaches to the fruits of the earth when first harvested.

‘ Every kind of fruits, cereal or other, is wholly sacred, interdicted, so long as a rite, often very symbolical, has not removed the interdict which protects it.’¹

These examples bring us back to the point at which every form of sacredness or consecration is seen to imply possession of a power, which to the primitive mind is mysterious and therefore fraught with peril, and against which it seeks to protect itself by varied defensive measures, interdictions, rites of purification, sacrifice, and the like, in other words, by various forms of Taboo.

Taboo, as thus illustrated, is clearly a product of semi-instinctive inference from the perception of an incomprehensible power in things or persons to danger, to which the appropriate answer-back is some mode of defensive action. The inference is hurried and impulsive because it is made under the influence of fear; and, for the same reason, the response is not the pause for reflective thought, still less the formation of a theory: it is *action*, which varies from simple respect for some taboo-sign of property or other reservation, to the most elaborate performance of ritual. At the instinctive stage of animal life, the answer-back to the perception of power which is feared is the action of flight or defence, which, the less intelligence enters in, the more resembles in swiftness and suddenness the reflexes of instinct. With the increase of intelligence, making its tentative unifications of experience, there is pause for thought, and judgements are formed about phenomena, and inferences made concerning them and the appropriate ways of dealing with them. The earliest inferences are impulsive and motived by feeling, especially fear; the later are ever more

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 79.

reasoned and based upon theory. The striking similarity in many of the religious and magical customs of savage man the world over, which enables us at a later stage to speak of them under the single designation of the Integration of Custom, is accounted for in part by the universality, in different degrees, of the characteristic of his psychology we are describing. Everywhere there is the perception of power in things and persons; everywhere the power is mysterious to his uninstructed mind; everywhere, therefore, such power is feared and regarded as a source of danger; and everywhere the religious practice of savage man may in considerable part be generalized as his varied endeavour to avert the danger and to escape the fear, by ritual methods of dealing with the power, which methods may be fairly described as more or less elaborate forms of Taboo.

2. The practice of Taboo is peculiarly fitted to illustrate a characteristic of the primitive mind which we have dealt with earlier under the name of Atomism.¹ This tendency to particularism in thought is the opposite of the tendency to co-ordinate experience and unify it into general ideas, general conclusions, and general laws for conduct, which is characteristic of the cultivated mind. It is indeed a legacy from the instinctive stage of human development. The humblest animal mind is not incapable of some kind of generalization; but it is the nature of the instinctive reflex to take each phenomenon by itself and to respond to each of the innumerable situations of life separately. In intelligence just emerging out of the instinctive stage, as we have seen, the co-ordinative power of mind is but slightly developed, and in consequence the formation of general ideas is difficult. The primitive type of thought, therefore, as compared with the developed and cultivated, is like a stream of

¹ See Chapter VIII.

disconnected atoms. The impressions and ideas of savage man may be likened to a swarm of bees which fly about singly and distractedly, or pile themselves together in a disordered mass. The thoughts of the cultured mind, as such, are like the bees in the hive: they are not without their moments of *Schwärmerei*, but they are arranged in classes and orders, and there is a certain definiteness in the task of each class and even of each mental unit, in building the structures, storing the food of the mind, and preparing for and producing the new generation of ideas. In other words, there is unification, integration, co-ordination by the developed brain and the cultivated mind, of perceptions into conceptions, of impressions into general ideas; and in the performance of the tasks, whether theoretical or practical, in which these ideas are employed, instead of innumerable unrelated, or loosely related, judgements and actions, there is formulated a much smaller number of general principles and laws, for application both to thought and to practical life. It has already been pointed out that this atomistic character of primitive thought is reflected in primitive language, where an appearance of complexity is given by the absence or rarity of general terms and principles, and by the multiplication of words and modes of speech designed to express each particular thing as it appears or each particular situation as it arises. This is precisely the simple complexity of Taboo.

Taboo, then, is essentially atomistic, like the primitive type of thought from which it proceeds. The difference between it and civilized law, of which it is the parent or ancestor, may be compared to the difference between a modern power loom and the simplest methods of weaving cloth. In the modern machine a great many individual movements and detailed operations are co-ordinated and performed by one

grand movement and complex operation, and thus rendered so manageable that a child could tend the loom. The almost vanished hand-loom weaver performs a large number of detailed operations with his hands, his feet, and his eye, in producing his patterned cloth. Simplest of all is the weaving of the primitive Papuan or the ancient Hebrew or Egyptian, which is but a superior form of plaiting, and in which each thread of the woof is individually and laboriously laced through the warp to make the simple fabric. This illustration of cumulative detail applies to any typical taboo.

‘ Among the Todas of Southern India ’, says Sir James Frazer, ‘ the holy milkman who acts as priest of the sacred dairy, is subject to a variety of burdensome restrictions during the whole time of his incumbency, which may last many years. Thus he must live at the sacred dairy and may never visit his home or any ordinary village. He must be celibate ; if he is married he must leave his wife. On no account may any ordinary person touch the holy milkman or the holy dairy : such a touch would so defile his holiness that he would forfeit his office. . . . Further, the holy milkman never cuts his hair or pares his nails so long as he holds office : he never crosses a river by a bridge, but wades through a ford and only certain fords.’¹

And so forth. The same characteristic weaving of the taboo thread by thread and the accumulation of small detailed regulations, are to be observed in all those elaborate systems of Taboo which reduce the sacred person, such as the Mikado of old Japan and the Dalai Lama of present-day Tibet and the priest-king of many tribes, to the condition of a prisoner or a recluse. The unhappy holy man, whose Mana is dangerous to ordinary people, or, which is the other aspect of the fear originating most of these taboos, whose Mana is so necessary to the existence of the people that at all costs his power must be preserved,

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 169.

is like Gulliver when the Lilliputians bound him with countless fine threads and fastened each hair of his head to the ground, until he could not stir hand or foot or head.

The multitude of prohibitions in such cases is the attempt of the mind of primitive man to meet every single possible contingency in experience, instead of devising general principles and laws which may cover a great many contingencies at once. Such general conceptions demand a certain development of the co-ordinative powers of the mind, while it is easy to see the simple logic in operation which, ascribing dangerous power to a sacred person or thing, extends step by step from one prohibition to another. Thus, the holy man is electric with Mana: contact must be avoided; he must not go freely about among the tribe. But what of his wife? She might pass it on; therefore he must be temporarily or wholly celibate. The vessels he eats from, what of them? They must be his alone, and broken when he is done with them. And so on. The French school of sociologists regard all savage theories and customs as of social origin; and one can see how in the case of Taboo their principle would operate. As the elders of the tribe gathered round the camp fire or other centre of council or gossip, one and another would make his suggestion, shaking his perturbed head over this or that danger which occurred to him; and fear of the mysterious power, the wealth of unknown possibility, the difficulty of proving a negative, would add another link to the chain of prohibitions. This growth of Taboo by an accumulation of crude inferences, unco-ordinated with each other, is a good example of the Atomism or particularism of the primitive type of mind.

3. The same characteristic of primitive mentality appears when one considers the relation of Taboo to the earliest forms of Law and Ethics. For the earliest

codes of law known to us, like the Torah of the Old Testament or the laws of Hammurabi, are not strictly speaking codes or systems, but rather collections of precepts, chiefly prohibitions, with reference to particular contingencies which may arise. These prohibitions are largely taboos of things and actions which may bring dangerous power upon individuals, but especially upon the tribe or nation. This particularistic way of dealing with actions, which made them wrong or crimes because they let loose mysterious and perilous forces, was natural to the atomistic character of the primitive mind. The co-ordinative powers of the mind had first to be developed before it was possible to formulate general laws applicable to a whole class of offences, or to arrive at principles of ethics which would cover a multitude of particular cases and questions of conduct. The varied regulations for the avenger of blood in Hebrew legislation, which may be paralleled from early Anglo-Saxon life and from other examples of the same stage of culture, are superseded when a central authority defines the law and exacts the penalty; and in such a prophetic principle as 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and thy neighbour as thyself', over against the Levitical laws, there is evidence of a mind capable of a large moral and spiritual generalization, which renders unnecessary a mass of precepts adapted to individual cases and situations. St. Paul's protest against 'the law of commandments contained in ordinances' and 'the works of the law', is a protest against a reversion or return to the primitive; and St. James in his 'law of liberty' signalizes in a beautiful phrase the presence of the modern type of mind, in whose developed power of unification and discrimination the human spirit is most free.

Taboo, finally, has the greater place in the origin of Law and Morality that it nearly, if not absolutely,

always has a social reference. Taboos mark a danger not usually in the first instance to the individual, but to the community ; and the community protects itself by raising the prohibition into a customary law. There is thus developed the rudimentary social conscience ; and a formative element is contributed to the basal distinction between right and wrong. It is true that some anthropologists exaggerate the influence of Taboo in this direction ; and Prof. Hopkins is probably correct in saying,

‘ Taboo did not originate ethics, as Dr. Jevons has tried to persuade us, but it has legalised and strengthened morality. It has done this, as man has risen from fear of a mysterious power to fear of a more defined spirit-power, by eventually putting the fear of God into the sinner.’¹

One guards, also, against an over-emphasis of fear, embodied in Taboo, as a creative element in primitive morality to the exclusion of other and more altruistic constituents. When the wolf abstains from eating the ptarmigan he has caught in lean times, and carries it to the mate and the cubs, the inhibition, the taboo, he lays upon himself is not imposed by fear but by rudimentary unselfish love. The character of human infancy and of the human family in general would naturally multiply these unselfish inhibitions, which originate not in fear but in self-restraining and even self-renunciating affections and impulses. With regard, moreover, to wider social relations than the family, a taboo mark indicating a Polynesian’s claim to property in a fruit-tree or an Eskimo’s right to his drift-wood, might soon be respected by his neighbour, not from fear lest he should swell up and die, but from a sense of fairness and of doing as you would be done by, a dim prevision, in fact, of the Golden Rule. It is a too exclusive consideration of the fear motive, which has led M. Loisy to define religion as essentially

¹ *History of Religions*, p. 74.

a system of taboos. It is an equally mistaken and exaggerated view which declares that 'fear made the gods'; as also is that which holds that fear made morality and created conscience. A rudimentary altruistic ethic is as old as the first human mother; and the protective impulse, an expression of nature's profound interest in the future generations, has probably a larger part than fear in the origination of conscience.

It is at this point also that the French sociologists, MM. Durkheim, Lévy-Bruhl and their school, may be seen pushing to an extreme their theory that all morality, like all religion, is the creation of the tribal or clan community. Much farther back, in the earliest human or sub-human family can be observed the working of those self-taboos, those inhibitions of the self in the interests of 'the other', as well as those positive activities for the good of 'the other', which have at least as much to do with the origin of human ethics and law, as fear of mysterious penalties or as tribal authority. To assert this, however, is not to deny the enormous influence of the tribal community and the Integration of Custom in the creation of ethical standards. It is indeed striking to reflect that the first conscience in man was above all a social conscience, impelling savage man to estimate his actions by the question of their being harmful or not, good or evil, to the tribe, that is, to others.

XIX

THE REASONING OF PRIMITIVE MAN

B. IMPERFECT CO-ORDINATIONS

(a) CAUSALITY AND MAGIC

IT is characteristic of all thinking that it unifies experience into more or less coherent wholes. It integrates the materials provided by sense impression into more or less differentiated totalities, such as concepts, judgements, reasoned conclusions. The evolutionary process of the universe, pursuing integration by way of differentiation, continues its invariable method in the life of its highest creation, Man, whose whole activity may be summed up as a Quest for Unity, and whose mental life is justly described as an endeavour after a unification of the elements of experience which shall be as rich and varied as possible. Man's power for such mental unification, however, is not always the same ; on the contrary, the evolution of mind is essentially the growth of that capacity for the co-ordination of experience. The physical organ of mind, the brain, is itself subject to the universal process ; and the finest type of civilized brain differs from the most primitive in being more compactly and sensitively unified, and at the same time more differentiated in its structure, functions, and powers. For this reason, and for others in the nature of savage life, the primitive mind in comparison with the civilized is deficient in co-ordinative power, and makes mental connexions among the phenomena of its experience with difficulty. We have seen the operation of this primitive character in relation to the simpler units of the mental life, the concept and the general idea, and sought to trace its influence upon the religious notions

and practice of savage man. We have also turned to the more complex activities of mind in judgement and inference, and have found that the primitive thinking of man necessarily retains something of the instinctive character of that stage of development which it shares with the higher animals. It is still under the influence of emotion, of feelings like fear and strong desire, especially fear; and this results in those hasty, impulsive, and often mistaken conclusions as to dangerous power in things and persons, which issue in the symbols, regulations, and systems of Taboo. The same disability we are now to see reappear in the more developed and deliberate thought of primitive man, when, not uninfluenced still by fear of the unknown but more protected by the shell-armour of his customs, he forms his crude theories as to the connexions among the phenomena of experience, and carries them into appropriate practice. The relation with which he is most concerned is naturally that of Causality, the connexions of cause and effect; and the best illustration of his mental attitude to that relation is probably to be found in Magic.

Having discussed with some fullness already the theory of M. Lévy-Bruhl as to primitive mentality, one need do little more than remark on his application—chiefly in his later volume, *La Mentalité primitive*—of that theory to savage man's idea of causal connexions. This may throw into relief what we take to be the true psychology of the matter. Here, as before, this author desires to prove that the mentality of primitive man is extremely, if not totally, different from that of civilized man. It is not only 'mystical' and 'prelogical'. 'It is more', he says, 'the causality which it represents to itself is of a type other than that which is familiar to us, and this third character is of a piece with the two former.'¹ The characteristic of

¹ *La Mentalité primitive*, p. 85.

this idea of causality which makes it 'different' is that 'everything or almost everything that happens is connected by it with the influence of occult or mystic powers (sorcerers, the dead, spirits, &c.).'¹ These 'mystic forces, which are causes, remain invisible and intangible to the ordinary means of perception'. A further important point in the theory is that the connexion between cause and effect is immediate. It does not admit of intermediate links, or at least if it recognizes them, it regards them as negligible.² The primitive mentality is thus indifferent to secondary causes. The argument is that the savage mind is so absorbed by the occult and mystic cause that what is to us the intermediate nexus of causes drops out of view. Thus, if a crocodile devours a man, or he is killed by poison, the mind of the primitive leaps at once to the witchcraft of a sorcerer as the true cause, and attaches no importance to the crocodile or the poison.³

Such facts as these are undoubted, and this attitude of mind is common and widespread among savage peoples. The point at which we part company with M. Lévy-Bruhl is where he makes a complete cleavage between the primitive mind and the civilized, regards that mind as different in nature, hardly inferior, if at all, in capacity to our own, and certainly not to be viewed as 'a rudimentary form of ours, as infantile and almost pathological'.⁴ To put our criticism of this theory in summary form, we may say first that the ascription of mystic and occult, invisible and intangible, causes to phenomena, is not peculiar to the savage mind. The fishermen of Morecambe Bay believed but lately that cockles grow out of the sand; Scottish children say that horsehairs become eels; and amulets, charms, and mascots have no meaning for moderns if there is not mysterious power clinging round them. In the second

¹ *La Mentalité primitive*, p. 86.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

² *Ibid.*, p. 87.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

place, the savage does, in his ordinary apart from his ritual life and action, take account continually of secondary causes. In his hunting, for example, he shows extraordinary accuracy in connecting the tracks of an animal with its presence in the jungle. Mere animal perception involves the relation of cause and effect between innumerable things; and Dr. Varendonck proves that the causal relation, antecedent and consequent occurring in their natural order, is unfolded, or, as it were, unrolled, in that humble form of memory which he designates 'Reduplicative'.¹ The character of 'immediacy', which M. Lévy-Bruhl finds in the inferences of primitive man from effects to 'mystic' causes, 'the immediate passage from such and such sensible perception to such and such invisible force,'² is explicable in terms of ordinary psychology. The same immediacy, though intensified, is characteristic of animal perceptions at or near the instinctive stage: the humbler the intelligence in the higher animals, the swifter and more impulsive the inferences from the unknown or uncomprehended to peril or dangerous power; and the apparently immediate or 'intuitive' conclusion is simply the semi-instinctive leap of the savage mind, still deeply influenced by emotion, at a causal connexion which may or may not be real. It is a hasty attempt at the co-ordination of phenomena by an intelligence which co-ordinates its experience with difficulty. It is one of the great services of M. Lévy-Bruhl's penetrating studies that he has emphasized and very fully illustrated the generalization towards which anthropologists have been recently converging, that it is a universal tendency of the primitive mind, in becoming human, to see behind effects, especially those which are not clearly understood, 'mystic' causes, that is, invisible and intangible powers.

¹ *Evolution of the Conscious Faculties*, pp. 36 f., p. 51, &c.

² *La Mentalité primitive*, p. 48.

In attempting a psychological explanation of this process of the evolution of the notion of causality, one observes that the first element in it is the fundamental tendency we have noted in all mind, to make 'wholes' in thought. This involves the making of mental connexions between phenomena. Of these connexions by way of inference, the most important is that of Causality, of cause and effect. It is a familiar difference between the highly scientific and the uneducated modern mind, that the latter makes causal connexions among phenomena which Science shows to be mistaken and illusory. This is also a profound difference between the cultivated modern and the primitive type of mind. The primitive mind, working with its imperfectly co-ordinated brain, imperfectly co-ordinates the data of its experience; and amongst these imperfect co-ordinations, connecting things which are not really connected or connecting things wrongly, are those of the causal relation. The co-ordination of cause and effect is present, as we have seen, in the mind of animals and of man at the instinctive stage of development. The instinctive inference that the moving reeds are an effect of which the tiger is the cause, makes the antelope dash away. Even at the instinctive level, errors in causal inference are made; but as intelligence takes over the mental life from the hands of instinct, while the range of causal co-ordination is greater, the margin of error is also increased.

Co-ordinative intelligence is up to a point common to man and the other animals, which have perceptions, inferences, and even plans resembling his. The great departure in evolution which made man's intelligence definitely human was the high development of *Imagination*. The large increase in the brain over the temporal region, as a development of the visual and auditory centres, is a striking difference between man and all the lower animals, and is marked even between him

and the anthropoids. Thus came into play a new organ of co-ordination, the creator of all man's works of genius, which was never to be superseded but only corrected and disciplined by the more recently evolved logical reason, whose physical organ is the frontal region of the brain. Now, the peculiar quality of imagination is the power to visualize phenomena and the connexions among them, *wholly within the mind*. Its constructions may be purely mental constructions, corresponding to no actually existing facts or connexions in the real external world, in other words, 'imaginary'.

A further important characteristic of imagination, which is also a primitive trait, is its extreme sensitiveness to feeling or emotion. Feeling, such as fear or desire, quickens its specific activity, namely, its tendency to work up its perceptions into an imaginative picture ; and feeling stimulates imagination in what is really a higher wave of the same tendency, the heightening of the imaginative picture by accumulating and working into it appropriate details from experience or imagined possibility. It is this imaginative activity of the mind which is the essential quality of genius in modern man, accounting for its scientific discoveries and inventions, its poetic and artistic creations, and its prophetic imaginations, together with those works of imagination which are profoundly true and yet never were 'on sea or land'. It was probably the same constructive imagination in more rudimentary form in primitive man, which brought him by a flash of genius to those discoveries, such as the kindling of fire, the flaking of flint or the use of polished tools and weapons, which, though so simple to our thinking, were so truly epoch-making that the momentum of them carried man through long ages before they were superseded. But it was the same imaginative activity of the primitive mind which created the vast illusions, the strange and to us inconsequent reasonings, the innumerable false

connexions among phenomena, which very largely constitute the Magic and Religion of savage man. To take but one example, which is highly germane to our present discussion, the idea of unseen power was a tremendously important discovery from the point of view of its subsequent importance for the most modern science and religion; and it was a true construction of most primitive imagination; but its earliest expression was of the simple and concrete character of the West African fetich to which the savage ascribes a power to bring him luck, or of the floating tree-trunk in the river, which by its mysterious appearances and disappearances gives the Fijian hill-tribes¹, or the Ten'a Indians, the impression of mystical power.

The mystical idea of power, to use M. Lévy-Bruhl's word, can be traced back directly to the simplest idea of cause. Cause is power to produce the effect. The cause does something, accomplishes something which is the effect, as rain makes wet and heat warmth or dryness. To perceive a cause is to perceive something which has power; and that power interests the savage only when it is potency to harm or help. If the object which has power is mysterious, and the mind cannot 'place' it among known causes, the imagination comes into play under the influence of emotion, which is usually fear, and the object is seen in a sort of Brocken mist of mysterious, dangerous, imaginatively heightened and exaggerated power. Thus from the simple idea of cause comes the magical idea of power, by which charms, amulets, fetiches, and also ritual practices, become the instruments of potent Magic.

Besides Imagination, there is a second psychological factor in Magic and magical ideas of Causality. The simpler unifications by the co-ordinating mind of primitive man, such as the concept or general idea, are,

¹ *The Hill Tribes of Fiji*, A. B. Brewster (Seeley, 1922), pp. 214-15.

as already seen, fluid and indefinite, wavering and mingling at the border line between, as, for instance, 'dead' and 'living', 'dangerous' and 'safe', 'sacred' and 'profane'. The more complex unifications of primitive reasoning have the same fluid and indefinite character and thus slip easily into each other. Hence the relation of Similarity, things co-ordinated in the mind as being like each other, and the relation of Contiguity, things co-ordinated in the mind as being near to or in contact with each other, encroach upon the relation of Causality, things co-ordinated as being respectively cause and effect. This is the more natural, as similar and contiguous things are often in causal relations. It is worth observing that even to the perception of the savage many like and contiguous things are causally connected. Thus, moon in the sky makes moon in the lake; white paint causes white totem marks on the face; the branch is like the tree, the child like the parent. So, many things associated in the mind by nearness or contact, had actual causal relations. The arrow and the wound, the spear and the blood which follows it, the track in the sand and the opossum that made it, the hair on the thorn and the passing sambhur—in all these there are both contiguity and causality. It is significant that the margins between Similarity and Contiguity on the one hand, and Causality on the other, fade into each other exactly where the sense of strangeness or mystery or 'mystic' power even slightly enters in. Thus among the Sema Nagas there are certain stones which are almost, though not quite, fetiches. They have a special name, *agucho*, and are 'black stones worn into curious shapes by water, one or two faintly resembling the shape of a human neck and head'. The most interesting point is that the natives believe that these *agucho*s breed and beget young.¹ With that faint haze or

¹ *The Sema Nagas*, p. 174.

aroma of strangeness and power about them, the large stones are regarded as causally related to the small stones which are like them and lie near them. The effect of feeling, that is, the feeling of mysterious power, quickening imagination, is thus to translate similarity and contiguity into causality. This has much to do with the Psychology of Magic.

THE REASONING OF PRIMITIVE MAN

B. IMPERFECT CO-ORDINATIONS

(b) MAGIC

THE principles we have just stated with regard to savage Magic, and of which we have made a suggestion as to the psychological origin, are among the great generalizations of Sir James Frazer, and are set forth in the two volumes of *The Golden Bough* called *The Magic Art*.¹ We may quote his statement of them:

‘If we analyse the principles of thought on which magic is based, they will probably be found to resolve themselves into two: first, that like produces like, or that an effect resembles its cause; and, second, that things which have once been in contact with each other continue to act on each other at a distance after the physical contact has been severed. The former principle may be called the Law of Similarity, the latter, the Law of Contact or Contagion. From the first of these principles, namely the Law of Similarity, the magician infers that he can produce any effect he desires merely by imitating it: from the second he infers that whatever he does to a material object will affect equally the person with whom the object was once in contact, whether it formed part of his body or not. Charms based on the Law of Similarity may be called Homoeopathic or Imitative Magic. Charms based on the Law of Contact or Contagion may be called Contagious Magic.’²

It appears to us necessary to supplement the latter principle by a further type of Magic which covers numerous cases of the supposed communication of power by contact or contiguity, whether the objects had been previously in contact or not. There are many things regarded as having magical potency, which are so without the association of either likeness or prior

¹ *The Magic Art* (Macmillan), vols. i and ii.

² *Op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 52.

contact. Such, for example, was the potato mentioned by a lady sitting next to Mr. Andrew Lang at dinner. "“I have found out”, she said, “a new cure for rheumatism. You carry a potato about in your pocket.””¹ Mr. Lang immediately connected the notion with the Maori habit of carrying about a baked yam as a protection against ghosts, with the classical ideas respecting the root mandragora or the mandrake, and with superstitions about roots among the Hottentots and elsewhere. He rightly associated such magical ideas and practices with Fetichism, for, in its more rudimentary forms of ascribing power over things and persons to an object having some association of curiosity, strangeness, or luck, Fetichism is hardly distinguishable from Magic.

There are thus three types of Magic : first, Imitative Magic, where the power is in the likeness of the magical object to the thing influenced, or of a magical process to a process which it is desired to bring about. Second, Contagious Magic, where the object worked with magically has been in contact with the person or thing influenced. Third, Magic of Communication, in which an object without any association of similarity or former contact, is on some other ground endowed with power over things or men.

1. Of Imitative Magic very many examples are given in *The Magic Art*. An instance, however, occurs in *Tom Petrie's Reminiscences*, which we quote because it is a double illustration of the extremely widespread rain-making magic, and in its simplicity is otherwise of psychological interest. A certain rainmaker among the Brisbane blacks was with Petrie on one occasion, and, says the author of the book, ‘it seemed setting in for wet weather, so the old man, *of course*, proceeded to bring the rain.’ We call attention, by italics, to the ‘of course’ and to the rainmaker’s careful choice of a likely time later on for the stopping of the rain, as

¹ *Custom and Myth*, A. Lang (Longmans, 1893), pp. 143 f.

illustrative of the simple unco-ordinated character of savage reasoning. 'He commenced by spitting into the air and making signs ; then he pulled the "kundri" stone' (a magic crystal) 'from his mouth, chanting words which had this meaning : Come down, rain, and make the "bon-yi" trees grow, so that we shall get plenty nuts, and make the yams to grow big that we may eat them.' It did rain shortly afterwards, but it lasted so long that Petrie asked the wizard to stop the deluge. He waited cunningly, says the writer, until 'he saw a break in the sky, and then started throwing fire-sticks up into the air, to dry up the rain, he said'. He now declared that he had made the weather altogether dry with fire, and that no more rain would come. And, as a matter of fact, the weather cleared soon afterwards.¹

It is an important point that there was no perception by Puram's (the wizard's) clansmen, of cunning or unfairness in his waiting until the clouds came, before proceeding to 'make' rain, or delaying till they broke, before he undertook to bring dry weather ; and probably he saw nothing of the kind in it himself. The capacity for making the more refined co-ordinations and consequently for the discrimination which could perceive the finer inconsistencies in a line of reasoning, was lacking in these primitive Australian brains. They might be vaguely conscious of the connexion between the clouds and the rain ; but it would be too abstract and difficult to be distinct. Much more easy and therefore impressive to such minds, was the simple, tangible, concrete relation between the wetness the rainmaker caused by spitting or sprinkling water and the succeeding rain, and between the fire-sticks and the dryness which followed. The concrete, easily perceived relation, to minds suggestible to the confident magician's claim, reinforced by the immemorial tradi-

¹ *Tom Petrie's Reminiscences*, pp. 201-2.

tion and custom of the tribe, slipped with facility from a mere sequence in time, into a causal, which is to say, a magical connexion. The spitting up into the air is a crude method of imitating the rainfall and so bringing it to pass, on the principle that like produces like; and many examples are given by Sir James Frazer in which the symbolism is much more elaborate, imitating thunder, lightning, the sound and the sprinkling fall of the rain. Among the more civilized peoples like the Greeks, the ceremonies often have elements of beauty, and higher forms of religion are combined with the ancient magical idea.¹

Other examples of this form of Imitative Magic, whose object is to stimulate natural processes or to assist the efforts of men, are connected with the food-quest. Here magic is frequently associated with Totemism, the object of the magical ceremony being the multiplication of the food-animal or food-plant. Thus the Witchetty-grub clan of Australia, whose totem is the grub of that name, have a ritual minutely imitative of its life-processes, which is designed to increase the supply. The Kangaroo men have ceremonies of a similar character, one specially interesting feature of which may be mentioned. The rocky ledge associated in tradition with the spirits of the kangaroos, is painted with red ochre and stripes of white gypsum, to represent the red fur and white bones of the kangaroo. It is now generally recognized that this and similar practices are closely analogous to the paintings by primitive man of the Upper Palaeolithic Age, particularly of the Aurignacian and Magdalenian periods, found in caves in France and Spain, and in less degree elsewhere. The theory is that these carvings, modellings, and paintings, which often show a high degree of artistic skill and spirit, completely lost apparently in the later and in other respects more

¹ See *The Magic Art*, vol. i, p. 248; cf. pp. 272-3.

advanced Neolithic culture, were efforts of Imitative, or, as it is sometimes called, Sympathetic, Magic, intended to help primitive man in his hunting. There is support for this in the general absence of carnivorous and inedible animals from these representations, and in the fact that in many of the animal figures a wound is indicated, sometimes with a weapon sticking in it or directed to it, at the vital spot which the savage in his hunting would desire to reach. As Prof. J. Y. Simpson says :

‘ When we find bisons depicted with javelins in their sides (Marsoulas grotto), or bleeding from a mortal wound (Niaux cavern), it is difficult to resist the impression that the wish or desire is father to the painting, and that it is hoped that the representations may be fulfilled in actual life. The picture in short is a portrayed prayer, a piece of sympathetic magic.’¹

The artists of these truly primitive works were thus probably the medicine-men, priests, or magicians of the tribe, and their art, accomplished sometimes in dark cathedral-like caverns and by faint artificial light, may have gathered about it a profound awe which crossed the wavering borderline between magic and religion. It is specially noteworthy, also, that the execution of these artistic creations in circumstances—the far inward recesses of caves—where the presence of the animals as models would be impossible, and yet with striking fidelity and truth to life as well as with verve and spirit, argues the possession by these early men of that high quality of visualizing imagination which we have already claimed for them.² These Palaeolithic men were low-browed but large-brained, that is to say, the visualizing region of the brain, and the corresponding imaginative power of the mind, were almost, if not quite, as well-developed as in modern man, while the prefrontal region of the brain and the co-ordinating,

¹ *Man and the Attainment of Immortality* (Hodder and Stoughton), p. 140.

² See Chapter XI.

discriminating power of reason there resident, the organ and the power which control and discipline imagination, were at a comparatively low stage of development.

The fine accuracy of detail in some of these works of prehistoric man, throws a further interesting light upon his psychology. It is characteristic of magical practice and ritual (and indeed of all ritualism) that the detail of it is of extraordinary importance. The reason is that the omission of some small point might invalidate the whole process. There is a parallel here, as modern psycho-analysts point out, between the mental state in savage faith in magic, on the one hand, and obsessional neurosis in modern civilized people, on the other. In both cases, as Dr. Oskar Pfister shows, the origin of the magical practice is 'anxiety', one of whose expressions is intense care that the ritual shall be performed with perfect accuracy in every detail.¹ This is in accord with the Atomism or particularistic nature of the primitive mind already noted, for which, owing to the undeveloped condition of the co-ordinating power of the brain, large generalizations or principles are much more difficult and rare than a series of loosely connected particulars in thought, or of small, detailed ritual actions, directed to solving the problems of existence.

It need not, however, be supposed that the true artistic spirit, with its delight in the work of art for its own sake, was wanting in these primitive artist-magicians. As we may see more fully in our last chapter, there is a certain pleasure attached by nature to all creative unifications, wherever life and the nervous system are sufficiently developed to perceive it. In the art of these magicians there would be a definite pleasure in relief from the absorbing supreme anxiety of the tribe, concerning the food-supply, when the

¹ *Some Applications of Psycho-Analysis*, pp. 330 f.

work of art was completed which had the power to render the folk successful in its hunting. But there must frequently have crept in the more general pleasure which always accompanies a mental or practical unification of a creative kind, when the artist saw the work itself as a completed whole, and even while the form of the bison or reindeer or mammoth grew into completeness step by step under his hand. The satisfaction or pleasure in the unification of the mind by deliverance from anxiety, would coalesce with and fade easily into the artist's joy in the accomplished work of art.

Many forms of Imitative Magic are associated with the cure of disease. In Aberdeenshire, stones resembling parts of the body, and thus called 'eye-stane' or 'head-stane' or the like, were supposed to cure the corresponding part when rubbed upon it.¹ The use of this type of magic is not by any means always beneficent in intention. The burning of an unpopular person in effigy, is a survival in modern times of a very widespread and varied kind of nefarious magic, such as making an image or likeness of an enemy and then sticking thorns, driving nails or a needle into it, burning or burying it, in order to cause the hated person's illness or death. The causal connexion between like things is assumed to be complete.

2. Contagious Magic resembles Imitative, inasmuch as it is simply another variety of imperfect co-ordination in reasoning, resulting in mistaken interpretations of cause and effect. The nail-parings or hair of a man is employed for nefarious magical purposes, because it is supposed to retain some subtle connexion with him, or probably it is more correct to say that the savage mind, lacking the power of discrimination which is but another form of co-ordination, makes the distinction or separation between what has been part of a man's

¹ *Custom and Myth*, A. Lang, p. 147. Cf. Dr. Gregor, *Folklore of the North-East Counties*.

body and the man himself, with difficulty, and thinks that he or his life-potency is somehow there. These to us unconsidered fragments may be kneaded with clay by his enemy into a rude image—the man being thus reconstituted—and placed in a running stream, or they may be made up with wax and exposed to a fire, when the melting away of the image brings about the fading away into death of the unfortunate object of the magic. Sir James Frazer gives an example of this type of magic employed for a kindlier purpose. In North Africa ‘a woman who wishes to attach her husband or lover to herself, will take earth from the print of his right foot, tie it up with some of his hairs in a packet, and wear the packet next her skin’.¹ This reminds one of the habit in recent times, of wearing a locket containing hair of some one loved and lost by death. It was worn next the skin, and often not as a display-ornament, but so that it was not visible. It is probably a reminiscence of a contagious magic, employed to keep the person near by the potency of something which had once been part of him or in contact with him, though it has undergone sublimation by more refined ideas.

A curious and far-travelled notion of Contagious Magic is based on the idea of a connexion between a wound and the weapon or other object which caused it. On the one hand, if the arrow which inflicted the wound, is thrown into the fire, greater inflammation and pain will result; on the other hand, if the weapon or thorn is greased, the injury will heal. This is a mingling of imitative and contagious magic; for fat or oil was a primitive healing agent—the Good Samaritan poured oil and wine into the robbed man’s wounds. It is striking to find Lord Bacon treating this notion quite seriously; and we borrow the following quotation for the sake of a further point of interest. ‘It is

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 201.

constantly received and avouched', says Bacon, 'that the anointing of the weapon that maketh the wound will heal the wound itself. In this experiment, upon the relation of men of credit (though myself, as yet, am not fully inclined to believe it) you shall note the points following: first, the ointment wherewith this is done is made of diverse ingredients, whereof the strangest and hardest to come by are the moss upon the skull of a dead man unburied, and the fats of a boar and a bear killed'¹—in peculiar circumstances. The interesting point referred to is the ingredients of the ointment consisting of things 'strange and hard to come by', such as the moss from a dead man's skull. This is characteristic of all magical spells: the strangest, most distant, most difficult to obtain, and generally most abhorrent, ingredients are supposed to be the most potent. The gruesome catalogue of elements in the witches' cauldron in *Macbeth*, is an excellent instance; strangeness and horror are gathered from all quarters 'for a charm of powerful trouble'.² The reason of this is the tendency of the primitive mind, often already noted, to ascribe potency to all that is strange and mysterious and therefore looked upon with fear or awe.

Oliver Wendell Holmes, in *The Professor at the Breakfast Table*, rather more than hints that the same tendency remained in quite recent medical practice. He mentions scourging as a cure for epilepsy—which is no doubt a case of Imitative Magic, the scourging of the body being expected to drive out the evil spirit. Holmes adds: 'A few score years ago, sick people were made to swallow burnt toads and powdered earthworms and the expressed juice of woodlice. The physician of Charles I and II prescribed abominations not to be named. Barbarism, as bad as that of Congo

¹ Frazer, *op. cit.*, p. 202.

² Act II, Sc. I.

or Ashanti.’¹ It was barbarism, but in a sense slightly different from the genial autocrat’s meaning, namely that these drugs were sought and compounded, not because of their direct curative qualities, as scientific medicines are, but because they had the potency which savage and uncultured man sees in the strange and horrible, wavering in the mists of primitive fears. It is one of the earliest, and it can be one of the most terrible, sophistications of the human mind, which makes the savage, or his modern representative in civilized life, the superstitious person, imagine that the strangest and most disgusting things, and the most pedantically cruel practices, are the most to be relied upon to keep him safe, to secure his aims and to influence the unseen powers, because to his primitive fear and horror they are the most mysteriously potent.

3. The third type of magic, the Magic of Communication, implies potency in some object which may have the association neither of likeness nor (originally) contiguity. The potato mentioned to Mr. Andrew Lang as a cure for rheumatism, is a case in point. To the people of England, on its first introduction, the now familiar tuber was rather an object of dread ; and doubtless its growth as a fleshy root, with occasional grotesque forms, was something more than a curiosity to the peasant mind. Hence a certain potency of Mana was ascribed to it, for which the euphemism, veiling ignorance and escaping explanations, was that it was ‘lucky’. Bagehot attaches great importance to the part played by *mere* luck, in the sense of chance happenings, in creating magic, fetichism, and so, early religion. He says, for example, that a savage ‘cannot well distinguish between a sign of “luck” or ill-luck, as we should say, and a deity which causes the good or ill ; the indicating precedent and the causing being

¹ *The Professor at the Breakfast Table*, vol. i, p. 159 (David Douglas)

are to the savage mind much the same ; a steadiness of head far beyond savages is required consistently to distinguish them '. That is the view we are here expressing. But when he puts forward instances, we see that Bagehot's ideas must be supplemented. Thus :

' Some expedition had answered when the resolution to undertake it was resolved on under an ancient tree, and accordingly that tree became lucky and sacred. Another expedition failed when a magpie crossed its path, and a magpie was said to be unlucky. A serpent crossed the path of another expedition, and it had a marvellous victory, and accordingly the serpent became a sign of great luck (and what a savage cannot distinguish from it—a potent deity which makes luck).'¹

These coincidences, it need scarcely be said, are not at all sufficient to account for the manifold tree- and serpent-cults and bird-omens known to anthropology. The magpie is a bird of startling and curious appearance, and so the primitive mind attaches to it mysterious potency. As Dr. Wm. Crooke says in his article on Serpent-Worship, the origin of all such cults ' is to be sought in the effect which all animals more or less had upon the mind of early man—a feeling that they were stronger, wiser, subtler than he ; in a word, uncanny '² The serpent, as Dr. Crooke shows, is specially equipped in many ways for making that impression. So also trees, with their mystery of life and growth, their dangerous shadows hiding possible lurking enemies, and above all their whispering and muttering sounds, are easily endowed with Mana, and become whispering oaks and oracles of Dodona, abodes of dryads, prisons of moaning Ariels, and haunts of nymphs and the great god Pan.

When an object has once had ascribed to it mysterious potency to hurt or to help, its progress towards becoming a fetich, an abode of spirit, a god, mainly

¹ *Physics and Politics*, p. 127.

² *Hastings' Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. xi, p. 399.

depends on the co-ordinative capacity of the mind applied to it, and particularly upon that personalizing or anthropomorphizing power which is a mode of co-ordination. The ascent of mysterious potency in this way, is markedly shown in the various cults of intoxicating juice. The *octli* and other ferments in Mexico and Peru came to be regarded as gods, just as wine did in Dionysus and Bacchus, and Soma in India. One book of the Rig-Veda is devoted to hymns in honour of Soma as a god. To the savage and even the semi-civilized mind there is difficulty in distinguishing between intoxication and inspiration, and between insanity and possession by a spirit or a god. It is in such ways that primitive man, beginning with a vague idea of power, life-will-potency or Mana, in things, proceeds naturally, with his growing intelligence and individuality, to raise that potency to more or less personal spirits or gods.

In turning to the practical side of Magic, one notes that the essence of it is that man endeavours to use the mysterious potency just mentioned, in order to serve his own ends. This practical endeavour we may now analyse. The psychological attitude of man to power has three primitive forms. If the power is *unmanageable*, he does either of two things: he flees from it, or he crouches or bends till the storm of it is past. If it is *manageable* power, he uses it as he does his tools or weapons to serve his ends. The impulse of flight from mysterious potency results, as already seen, in Taboo. The impulse to take refuge from overwhelming power in stillness or crouching before it, characteristic of many animals at the instinctive stage, assumes in primitive man the form of cringing, of submission, dull fatalism if there is no hope, and if there is, of propitiation and supplication. The employment, on the other hand, of *manageable* potency, is the work and sphere of Magic. The thing with the power in it

becomes to the primitive man his tool, his instrument for getting things done. The difference of it from his ordinary tools is that the power is mysterious and therefore imaginatively heightened. The Australian's spear or club is not sacred to him; but his spear-thrower, which casts the weapon an amazing distance by a mysterious dynamic, and his boomerang, which astounds even the European by its calculated vagaries, are both regarded with semi-religious awe. His simplest and accordingly most primitive way of using a Mana-possessing object is, therefore, that of the straightforward application of its force, namely in a coercive manner. Thus, just as he employs a flint to strike from a core a splinter for an arrow-head, or any other tool for its appropriate purpose, so savage man employs his queerly shaped stone to cure pain, his imitative process to compel a natural process like rain-fall to take place, and the hair of his enemy wrought into an image and destroyed, to bring about his foe's illness and death. This coercive quality in magic continues even when it comes to be applied to spirits, at later, animistic and even higher stages of belief. Certain objects such as charms, certain words and formulae as in spells, certain ritual procedures and acts, are relied upon to produce certain results, as the chemist expects his proper reactions, and the engineer the resultant movement from the application of his power. Even the spirits and the gods cannot resist such magic, as the striking of the tinder-box brought the dog with eyes like towers, in Hans Andersen, and the rubbing of Aladdin's lamp compelled the Djinns to build his palace in a night.

The resemblance of this type of magic to science cannot escape us; and indeed it *is* rudimentary science—the knowledge of how to employ power so as to produce a desired effect. Nevertheless, a religious element is never far away. It must be rare, indeed,

for the magician, especially when he is sincere, to be as calm and unemotional in the use of his spell as a mathematician busy upon the calculus. For the savage knows he is working with mysterious power, something elusive and superhuman; and he does not escape easily, or long, from fear and awe of his own mysteries. There is always a nervousness in the primitive mind about being minutely accurate in the details of spell and ritual, like a chemist dealing with the manufacture of explosives. And thus, as the potency dealt with becomes very great, and particularly as it takes personal form in spirits and gods, a new attitude in magic comes into play.

This new attitude, like the former one, has its parallels in the savage's ordinary life. If he can command sufficient power over another person to make him do things, the savage will so coerce him, and employ him as a slave, or a servant, as he does his axe or his digging-stick. But if his neighbour is too powerful to be compelled, he will ask him to do things, or he will make common cause with him, and try to go the way he is going and so take advantage of his power, or, if he is very strong and angry and dangerous like a great chief, then he will endeavour to appease and propitiate him, appealing by words and deeds to his mercy. These are three higher forms of magic than that of mere coercion; and in them Magic begins to shade off imperceptibly into Religion. The request to a potent object or being to do things for the savage—which is the point where spell, the command to do things, slips into prayer—may be directed to an inanimate object, because, as already frequently pointed out, primitive man never quite separates potency or Mana in things, from life like his own and will like his own. Hence the Australian kneels down and prays to his knife to go and kill his enemy, and the Aino of Japan bids the young bear he is sacrificing go to the land whence the

bears come, that he may return and bring many others with him. When the request is made to a human-like spirit or god, it rises naturally into prayer-like forms with reverent ascriptions and humble submissions.

The form of magic which makes common cause with the potent object or being so as to share in its or his power, appears most characteristically in Totemism, where the various ceremonies, chiefly of Imitative Magic, are designed to lift the worshipper into communion with the Totem-god, so as to be within the sphere of its potency and beneficence. These processes are often accompanied by addresses to the Totem, which are perceptibly rudimentary forms of that lofty kind of prayer which is an aspiration after communion with God. Lastly, the sense of *vast* potency which comes with the deification of natural phenomena, like the sun or the sky, or with the coalescence of smaller deities into one great god or spirit, tends to eliminate from the worshipper's mind the idea of compulsion (though coercive magic dies hard even in high religions), and reduces him to the posture of supplication, propitiation, and sacrifice. Wherever there are high gods, or gods whose power eludes by its vastness magical compulsion, magic tends to vanish in the greater light of religion, or to become like a smoky lamp in the dim cellarage of the illicit and nefarious. Here also spell gives place to real prayer, as when the Khonds of Orissa conclude a prayer to the earth-goddess, after enumerating their material wants, with the words: 'We are ignorant of what it is good to ask for. You know what is good for us, give it us.'¹ This is not far beneath the prayer of Epictetus: 'Do with me what thou wilt: my will is thy will: I appeal not against thy judgements.'² In these, as in the Christian 'Not my will but Thine be done', Religion is at the

¹ *Evolution of Religion*, L. R. Farnell, p. 183.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 205.

opposite pole from Magic. In tracing thus, however, the forms of magic till they mingle with and fade into religion, and spell to where it becomes prayer, we have really pronounced on the somewhat disputed question of the relation of magic to religion. We shall devote a portion of the next chapter to a discussion of that question.

XXI

THE REASONING OF PRIMITIVE MAN

B. IMPERFECT CO-ORDINATIONS

(c) MAGIC AND RELIGION. SPELL AND PRAYER

THE controversy concerning the relation of magic to religion, and particularly as to the priority in age of the one over the other, is, like so many other disputes, a question mainly of the meaning of the terms employed. Sir J. G. Frazer has been vigorously challenged by Dr. F. B. Jevons and Mr. E. O. James for maintaining that magic is prior to religion in origin, and that there was an Age of Magic before there was an Age of Religion. But the truth or otherwise of this simply depends upon the definition of religion involved. If we accept Sir James Frazer's definition of religion, it is true. He defines it thus: 'By religion, then, I understand a propitiation or conciliation of powers superior to man which are believed to direct and control the course of nature and of human life.'¹ That is to say, religion everywhere and always means the recognition of quasi-personal beings or spirits. This, however, many anthropologists regard as a somewhat advanced stage in the evolution of religion. Yet it is clear from the following passage that this is his position:

'In the first place, a consideration of the fundamental notions of magic and religion may incline us to surmise that magic is older than religion in the history of humanity. We have seen that on the one hand, magic is nothing but a mistaken application of the very simplest and most elementary processes of the mind, namely, the association of ideas by virtue of resemblance or contiguity; and that on the other hand, religion assumes the operation of conscious or personal agents superior to man

¹ *The Golden Bough* (Abridged Edition), p. 50.

behind the visible screen of nature. Obviously the conception of personal agents is more complex than a simple recognition of the similarity or contiguity of ideas; and a theory which assumes that the course of nature is determined by conscious agents is more abstruse and recondite, and requires for its apprehension a far higher degree of intelligence and reflection than the view that things succeed each other simply by reason of their contiguity or resemblance.'¹

It is perfectly clear how, with this advanced conception of religion, Sir James could assert that 'among the Australian aborigines magic is universal but religion almost unknown', though even here he would probably admit that this was an over-statement, since the more recent studies of these tribes have proved the existence of a widespread belief among them in spirits and gods.

On the other side Prof. Hopkins, in discussing definitions of religion, holds that 'we may not even imply in our definition that religion necessitates a belief in spiritual powers, because such belief is not essential'.² His own definition is: 'Religion is squaring human life with superhuman life,' or more fully, 'what is common to all religions is belief in a superhuman power and an adjustment of human activities to the requirements of that power, such an adjustment as may enable the individual believer to exist more happily'.³ Accordingly, if one accepts this definition of religion as belief simply in a superhuman power, it is obvious that Sir J. Frazer's sharp distinction between magic and religion, and between an Age of Magic and an Age of Religion, vanishes. For *magic* implies belief in a superhuman power in magical things, beings, and processes, and is thus at some points of human development indistinguishable from religion. The object which the primitive savage regards as magical, possesses Mana, mysterious power, which, as we have seen, he cannot

¹ *The Golden Bough*, p. 54.

² *The History of Religions*, p. 2.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

separate from the notions of life and volition like his own. In simple terms, it can do things for him he cannot do alone, it can move about from place to place as living things do, and it can do things if it likes, that is, it has will like his own, which can be coerced or cajoled into doing them. Add a little awe or fear of this mysterious power in the magical object—never really absent from his mind, as shown by the tendency to surround the object with taboos—and you have reached the generalized form, the magico-religious state of mind, from which both magic and religion have developed.

Prof. Jevons attempted to establish a fundamental distinction between magic and religion,¹ which depends on a particular definition of magic, as Sir James Frazer's distinction does upon his definition of religion. He seeks to show that magic and religion are found together in the most primitive human societies, but at the same time in strong opposition to each other. This opposition, however, he could only establish by the quite unjustifiable limitation of the term 'magic' to nefarious magic; and he declares that we should 'reserve the term "magic" exclusively for the proceedings which excite the disapproval of the community'. If one granted him this premise, no doubt he could show the cleavage between magic and religion running very far back indeed; but it is impossible to do so without giving to magic a restricted sense, which it has neither for the primitive mind nor for the science which studies it. There is, for instance, nothing harmful to the community in taking the advice of a 'wise woman' to cure warts by burying a piece of meat, on the principle of Imitative Magic that with the decay of the meat the warts would vanish.² It *might* be contended that the action is in the interests of the com-

¹ *Introduction to the Study of Comparative Religion*, 1908.

² See article in criticism of Dr. Jevons's position by N. W. Thomas, in *Folklore*, 1918.

munity, which could be supposed to have a refined objection to warts on the hands of its members ; but even in that improbable contingency, the process could not be called religious as opposed to magical. In the case of Witchcraft, which Prof. Jevons takes as a crucial case of nefarious magic, and which he contends is always reprobated by the community, it is really impossible to distinguish between a witchcraft which, according to him, the community fears and hates and regards as ' illicit ', on the one hand, and on the other, the witchcraft which is exercised, with identical magical methods, by the medicine-man or priest of the tribe in the interests either of individuals or of the community as a whole. Among the Queensland aborigines, according to Mr. Tom Petrie's observations, the Turrwans or ' great men ' of each clan were regarded as having power to cause disease and death by sending their magic crystals into the body of an enemy, but also to cure illness by extracting from the body the crystal which was its cause.¹ One remembers the ' wise woman ' whom John Ridd in *Lorna Doone* consulted on his love affair, and the similar character in *Westward Ho!*, representatives in fiction of the ' white witches ' of two or three centuries ago, who were surrounded by a certain awe of their mysterious power, and liable, in times of special excitement, to be treated cruelly as true witches, but were often kindly regarded by the community. It is not, therefore, a satisfactory distinction which separates magic from religion in primitive life, on the ground that magic is treated as nefarious and reprobated by the community.

Essentially the same distinction is adopted by M. Émile Durkheim in his work, *Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*. In his view, ' magic is opposed to religion as the individual to the social '. Religion is ' of the group '. ' In all history we do not find a single religion

¹ *Tom Petrie's Reminiscences*, pp. 29 f.

without a Church.' 'There is no Church of Magic.'¹ The distinction thus made is in harmony with the Group Theory of primitive psychology advanced by the French school, which we have already criticized. We may add that the antithesis is as little supported by the facts as the similar theory of Prof. Jevons. The individual magician frequently performs a social function, in accomplishing his magic rites, as in 'rainmaking', for the good of the community. The community itself, in its dramatic representations of the life of the food-animal, which are designed magically to increase its numbers, and which later evolve into the ritual dance, performs acts which are entitled to be called magical at least as much as religious. The artist medicine-men of the Magdalenian Age, creating their probably magical pictures of the food-animals in the far recesses of caverns which resemble cathedrals, and doing this in the interests of the hunting of the tribe, who would regard their operations with a deep satisfaction mingled with awe, are not easily distinguished from a priesthood of a 'church of magic'. M. Durkheim withdraws a little from the extreme antithesis of magic and religion, in a note in which he says: 'in thus distinguishing magic from religion we do not mean to establish a break of continuity between them. The frontiers between the two are frequently uncertain.'²

The attempt to make a fundamental distinction between primitive magic and primitive religion must fail, for there is a magico-religious stage in primitive man's thought and practice, a 'generalized' type, from which magic, religion, and also science, have been differentiated. Savage man ascribes power to the magico-religious object, in the undefined sense of Mana, in which power is associated with life or animation, and will or volition. This life-will-potency is mysterious,

¹ *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, p. 44.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 45.

dangerous if mishandled, and so has an aroma or 'aura' of fear and awe about it, which may easily become veneration. So far as the magical thing is felt by primitive man to be *manageable*, usable as are his flints, his tools and weapons, for defined ends, the use of it is magic, a secular thing, the germ of science and art. But in so far as its mystery plays upon his fears, and so soon as its power eludes his grasp—now gripped surely as he holds his spear, but now vaguely uncontrollable like a dancing shadow—he regards it with awe, defends himself from it with taboos, and acts towards it as a thing not to be commanded to do what he desires but rather besought, which is the beginning of the religious attitude. When the mysterious potency is raised to a living spirit or a god, the magic, like a star close to the moon, pales, recedes, and vanishes in religion.

The relation between Magic-Spell and Prayer may be understood in the same way. Dr. Jevons, as in his general view of magic and religion, endeavours to prove a cleavage between spell and prayer at the very beginnings of thought. They are, he thinks, distinct in nature; and he will not have it that prayer is a higher form evolved from the lower form, spell. He makes the distinction that spells are essentially coercive, an exercise of quasi-physical force, and that they are generally reprobated by the community. Prayer, on the other hand, is supplicatory, submissive, and at the same time has the approval of the community, with whose interests it is generally in harmony. The theory, however, which is really an effort to make prayer, with its definite spiritual value, absolutely primitive and inherent in human nature, does not cover the facts. Dr. Jevons seems led away by striving after the superficial catholicity, the *quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*, which it is imagined proves a belief to be true, and a religious practice such as prayer to be spiritual and Divinely inspired. But there is no need to fear that

prayer may lose its value by being traced to its primitive roots, any more than the daffodil, by being related to its very different bulb in the soil, loses its beauty.

In thus tracing it back, we come as before to primitive man's notion of power-life-will in the magical object. He proceeds to use the power, accompanying the action with appropriate gestures and equally appropriate words. The action and the gestures are magic; and the words are the spell. The process is so natural that it is universal, and can be observed not merely in cases of modern neurosis and unbalanced minds, but in sane, civilized men when in the relaxed mental attitude of play, and at the same time under its excitements. Examples might be given from every sport; but the present writer has seen the most ludicrous instances on the bowling-green, when the bowler twists his body in the direction in which he wishes the bowl to go, and calls out to it words of command, encouragement, and even entreaty. Forgetting for the moment the element of spell in the use of words in such cases, one notes that there is here that quality of *action at a distance* which is one of the characteristic qualities of magic. Where it appears in the primitive mind, M. Lévy-Bruhl ascribes this quality to the 'mystique' nature of savage mentality, in that it is oblivious of contradictions; and thus he leaves it as inexplicable. Writers of the modern psycho-analytic school throw some light upon it, by insisting on the unconscious or subconscious influence of desire upon inward thought and outward action, especially in the tendency to symbolism. Thus Dr. Oskar Pfister says that primitive man 'tries (acting on the wish principle) to obtain by symbolic action that which he cannot obtain when acting on the principle of reality'.¹

We may suggest a quite simple psychological theory of the process. The most primitive response to all

¹ *Some Applications of Psycho-Analysis*, p. 330 f.

mental impressions, and therefore that which tends to occur first in the absence or relaxation of civilized inhibitions, is appropriate muscular action. As Ribot says, speaking of the 'most elementary forms of the affective life', 'their tendency to translate themselves into acts is immediate and irresistible'.¹ There is a strong tendency which comes out in civilized people, when excitement or other absorption releases the mind from the normal inhibitions of culture, to do, imitatively, the thing one wishes to be done. M. Varendonck gives a number of instances of this. He made the familiar observation that a mother, while her little daughter was reciting, unconsciously recited along with her, without making a sound. Looking on at a film of the Far West, in which two men were struggling for the possession of a revolver, he found himself 'making movements of the shoulders', sympathetically taking part in the fight.² Many similar examples might be given. The point of importance is the striking resemblance of these unconscious processes, translating desire into appropriate action, in the civilized mind, to the magic of savage man. The absurdity of seeking to make a person at a distance from you recite correctly, by moving your own lips, or of enabling your hero in the picture to reach the revolver, by moving your own appropriate muscles, or of turning your golf-ball away from the bunker by inclining your own body in the desired direction, is speedily apparent, and with a smile you restore the civilized restraint; but the resemblance between you and the savage magician is for the moment complete. He also, in his cavern at home, attempts to influence the flight of the arrow of the hunter far in the forest, by painting it already in the side of the bison in his magical picture, and tries to produce the thunder by making a thunderous noise, and to make the food-

¹ Quoted in *Evolution of the Conscious Faculties*, J. Varendonck, p. 203.

² *Op. cit.*, pp. 171-2.

animal come, by elaborate imitations of its coming. The difference is that the primitive man has not yet acquired the logical reason, employing the prefrontal region of the brain, which has taught civilized man that there is no causal connexion between his imitative or symbolical action and the events he desires to bring to pass at a distance from himself. He allows himself to be swung onward by the impulse to put desire into action, which is so powerful in civilized people in their unconscious moments. He even, with growing intelligence, thinks out a crude theory about it, and sees it confirmed by experience, noting its successes and ignoring its failures, as is natural to the uncritical mind seeing only what it desires to see. He does symbolically, in action resembling it, the thing he desires, and believes that it is accomplished. This is his theory and practice of Magic.

When the expression of the desire in action takes the form of words, we are in the region of Spell or primitive prayer. We have observed the civilized bowler calling to his bowl with words of command or entreaty. Thus also the rain-maker accompanies his imitative magic, the gestures and paraphernalia whereby he imitates the approach and falling of rain, with words of command or request, 'Come down rain, come down rain', and the like. Sometimes the words are a mere assertion that the wished-for process is taking place, on the principle of magic just analysed, that to say a thing is happening makes it happen. Thus the New Caledonian kindles a fire to make the sun's heat increase, and at the same time adds the formula, 'Sun, I do this that you may be burning hot'.¹ There is truth so far in Dr. Jevons's position, that spell may be roughly distinguished from prayer in that it is regarded mainly as coercive, having power in itself to compel the desired event to take place, or to coerce a spirit or god into doing what

¹ Farnell, *Evolution of Religion*, p. 175.

is required. The sense of command remains, so long as the magical potency is felt to be manageable like a tool or weapon in the man's hand, enabling him to be, as in Meredith's Eastern fantasy, *The Shaving of Shagpat*, Master of the Event. The words pronounced add to that potency by reason of a primitive awe of language, still lingering, perhaps, from the first human time when speech was new, but at any rate enhanced by the probably immense variety of tongues and dialects making speech often unintelligible and mysterious. The stranger the words, generally, the more powerful the spell—a fact with which Sir Walter Scott makes play in the introduction to *Guy Mannering*. The vast reverence of the illiterate mass for the written word in later times, added in the same fashion to the potency of written spells. A further element of power was conveyed by the use of mighty names of gods and spirits.

The potency, then, of the Spell, consists in its power to command an event, a process or a spirit, by means of the strongest association in it of potent elements, far-fetched ingredients, compelling actions, mighty words or names. The stronger the spell, the greater the man's sense of power, and the more daring and insolent his air of command. The extreme of this is to be found in the notion, existing even in the Christian church, in quarters where superstition is permitted to exist side by side with its spiritual faith, that there are certain rites which even God Himself cannot resist. Thus ;

' French peasants used to be, perhaps are still, persuaded that the priests could celebrate with certain special rites, a " Mass of the Holy Spirit ", of which the efficacy was so miraculous that it never met with any opposition from the Divine will ; God was forced to grant whatever was asked of Him in this form, however rash and importunate might be the petition.' ¹

Wherever, in general, an external religious rite must be performed only by certain persons in a certain scrupu-

¹ *The Magic Art*, vol. i, p. 232.

lously exact manner, with the repetition of always the same words, and when the rite being so performed with exactness infallibly calls down a certain Divine power or miraculous action of God, we are really in the sphere of magic rather than in that of religion.

There is, however, as suggested earlier, a form of prayer which is of a higher character than the spell type of prayer we have just been considering. Both types have a common root in the endeavour to give physical, motor expression to an inward desire ; but at an early stage this higher form, which is more akin to true prayer, diverged from the other. As already remarked, so long as the magical potency in an object or process is felt to be manageable, the words take the form of command rather than request, and are coercive spell more than entreaty or supplication. Even from the beginning of thought, however, the idea of life like his own in the potent thing, and also volition, made the savage ask it to do things for him, as he might ask a friend, alternatively to commanding it as he might a slave, a woman, or a child. The Australian who kneels down and sings a request to his knife to go and kill the abductor of his wife, is, as Prof. Hopkins points out, in a religious attitude ; and his words are prayer rather than spell. But when the potency is not so manageable and eludes control, the elements of respect and entreaty more and more supplant command and compulsion. Thus, as Dr. Farnell says, while ‘ the Chinese “ let the devil of poverty depart ”, and the Greek “ Go out, hunger ”, and “ To the door, you ghosts ” are pure coercive spells, the Buro address to the small-pox, “ Grandfather small-pox, go away ”, is of a different colour.’¹ The disease by hard experience has proved a vast and elusive power, and so the man entreats it as he might a great chief. The Santee Indians, having made a feast for the buffalo, address him thus, ‘ Grandfather, venerable man, thy

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 170-1.

children have made this feast for thee : may the food thus taken cause them to live and bring them good fortune'. This is clearly the petition form of prayer. The title of kinship, such as 'grandfather', is very common in primitive prayer. Thus, the Egyptian appealed to Isis, 'O my father, my brother, my mother Isis'; the Babylonian addressed Bel as father and mother, and a Vedic hymn contains the phrase, 'Thou, O Agni, art our father, we are thy kinsmen'.¹

The address implying kinship is a simple and natural way of expressing respect and the endeavour to conciliate ; and there is probably an element of imitative magic in its use, the inference being that to *say* there is kinship will bring about the fact of kinship between the god and the worshipper. This may be one of the roots of Totemism ; for, in seeking to propitiate the totem-god, say the food-animal, bear or kangaroo, which they wished to come in generous numbers, the obvious thing to do would be to claim kinship with the totem, and treat that kinship as a *fait accompli*, calling the totem the grandfather or ancestor of the tribe. Here also may be the germ of the idea of prayer as communion with God. Without further illustration of the process it is perhaps clear that, as the conception of the deity becomes more and more imposing, man's attitude in prayer is progressively more humble and entreating. As his idea of God increases in spirituality, his requests are more and more in the moral and spiritual sphere. Many of the nobler pagans reach that conception of infinite wisdom and beneficence in God, which sums up all prayer in the petition, Thy will be done. This is a sublime form of that integration, that Unification of the human spirit, which we have maintained to be the goal of all man's striving since first he became human ; and in that integration, which is capable of indefinite differentiation, it is natural that he should find at once his

¹ L. R. Farnell, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

truest rest and the inspiration of his onward march. There is a still higher differentiation and consequently a richer integration, which brings also a finer and more satisfying sense of unity to the soul, in the Christian conception of the Divine Fatherhood. For, the greatness of the human spirit which that Fatherhood implies in its children, permits us a certain freedom and power to make requests which He is able to grant. As His sons, we have the power, through the prayer which is communion with Him, to provide Him, if one may say so, by a sublimated and transfigured magic, with the conditions upon earth, spiritual, moral, and even physical or natural, which enable Him, who honours man with so great a share in His work, to answer our highest prayers, and without stooping in the slightest beneath Himself, to do what even we desire.

It is a long road which man travels from magic spell-forms to this highest form of prayer. It is, however, a continuous road, a real process of evolution like that which prevails in other spheres. We are therefore unable to accept the guidance of Dr. Jevons in his attempt to take the Lord's Prayer out of the general course of evolution, and to make it the subject of a special creative revelation. It is not necessary, in order to give that prayer its supreme and indeed unique beauty, or to give the Teacher of it his supremacy, to regard all earlier human prayer and aspiration as but darkness in contrast with its incomparable light.¹ What in that case could one say of the prayers of the Old Testament, of the prophets and psalmists? And what could be said of this Greek prayer to Asklepios:

'We rejoice in thy divine salvation, because thou hast shown thyself wholly to us: we rejoice that thou hast deigned to consecrate us to eternity, while we are still in these mortal bodies. We have known thee, oh true life of the life of men. . . . Adoring thy goodness, we make this our only prayer . . . that thou

¹ *Introduction to the Study of Comparative Religion*, pp. 172-3.

wouldst be willing to keep us all our lives in the love of thy knowledge.' ¹

This, as Dr. Farnell truly says, 'would not surprise us if found in a Christian liturgy'.

It is, in fact, one of the services of the comparative science of religions, that we learn from it to reserve the term idolatry for what is low and unethical in all religions, and to regard that as true worship of God which, however it names Him, is morally and spiritually high and pure. It is impossible to deny that in non-Christian times, peoples, and cults, prayer has sometimes risen to a great height of spiritual refinement, both in regard to its conception of the divine nature and its interpretation of human need; and it is an unfortunate error to deny that these noble conceptions and prayers are revelations of God and inspirations of His Spirit, given to minds which were able to receive them. The immense gradations traceable in the religious thought of mankind, and in the spiritual quality of their prayers, from low to high, mark out a process of evolution of the capacity of man to meet and to express—it is the same thing from two different aspects—a progressive revelation of God. There is one image which might represent the essentially religious attitude of man throughout all the ages, namely, that of man face to face with a difficult and hostile world, and, conscious of his own weakness in the struggle with it, tending ever to look round him for some one or something stronger than himself and stronger than that world, to save him from it and to help him to conquer it.² It is what we have called man's Quest for Unity, the fundamental endeavour, in which man reproduces and carries on, like the most advanced wave of the tide, the universal evolutionary process, to achieve unification within

¹ *Evolution of Religion*, p. 207.

² Cf. Auguste Sabatier, *Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion* (Hodder and Stoughton), Ch. I.

himself, in his world, and between himself and his world, and so to find harmony and peace. This tendency is creative of religion ; and there is, so far as we know, no better explanation of it than to say that the spirit of the universe implanted the tendency, co-extensive in its incidence with humanity itself ; in other words, that God, the Omega of man's upward striving, is the Alpha of it too.

XXII

THE REASONING OF PRIMITIVE MAN

C. FATIGUE OR WEARINESS OF EFFORT

ATOMISM : DIVINATION : SUGGESTIBILITY

THE lack of co-ordinative power which is the main difference between the primitive type of mind and the civilized or cultivated, manifests itself, not only in the difficulty the savage finds in grasping together phenomena and their relations, in such a way as to form coherent totalities in thought, like concepts, causal connexions, and general principles or laws, but also in the transience of that grasp, and the ease and relief with which he relinquishes any sustained effort of co-ordination. In judgement and in reasoning, as in more elementary operations of the mind, the primitive falls back upon various ways of resting and escape from the effort to pursue a train of reasoning or to sustain a line of thought.

1. An important manifestation of Fatigue, already dealt with under the head of the Generalized Mind,¹ is what we have called Atomism. The reasoning of primitive man attains comprehensiveness only in a cumulative and, as it were, inorganic way, piling details together like a handful of pebbles, while the reasoning of the cultured mind forms organic unities in which the details are absorbed and transformed. A striking illustration of this Atomism in the reasoning of savage man, is found in the Fitzpatrick Lectures of the late W. H. R. Rivers.² It is from the realm of magic, and describes the extraordinary elaborateness of the process by which a sorcerer of the Kai tribe of New Guinea

¹ Chapter VIII.

² *Medicine, Magic, and Religion* (Kegan Paul, 1924), pp. 19-24.

endeavours to produce the illness and death of an enemy. A few of the details of the method, which is admirably self-consistent and logical in its atomistic manner, may be mentioned. Having secured a portion of the soul-substance of the intended victim, by gaining possession of something which had been part of, or closely associated with, his body, such as hair, nail-parings, remains of food and the like, 'as soon as possible the sorcerer wraps the ga' (as this article is called) 'in a leaf of which caterpillars are fond, with the idea that, as the leaf is eaten by caterpillars, so will the body of the victim be eaten by worms'. Later, 'the packet is wrapped in a prickly creeper so that the body of the victim shall be tormented with painful stings, and then in a leaf with fine hairs which tickle and irritate the skin, and the whole is wrapped in a withered leaf of the bread-fruit tree, with the idea that, as the leaf falls to the ground, so shall the body of the victim wither and fall into the grave'. So it goes on in its fantastic elaborations, yet entirely logical, and simple as the adding of stone after stone to a cairn, or a child's gathering of shells. There is no organizing principle, unless the magical premise that like is the cause of like, applied separately to the details of the process, may be called such; and the connexion of them, as inorganic and mechanical as beads on a string, is maintained, sometimes through 'many months',¹ by the fatal purpose.

In the continuation of the account of the process, it is possible to see quite clearly the unco-ordinated contingencies of the illness he wishes to produce, come, one by one, to the mind of the sorcerer, and his crude ingenuity invent an appropriate answer-back separately to each, adding thus to the interminable detail of the whole.

'The packet is heated at the fire after being covered with fine prickles, and the bark of a tree covered with tubercles is added

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 22.

so that the body of the victim may be covered with similar lumps. The packet is bespattered with the chewed root of a hot peppery plant so that the victim shall have fever. The fire at which the packet is heated must be made only of certain woods and of a creeper, the section of which darkens when it is cut, with the idea that the skin of the victim shall darken and his blood become black. . . .¹ &c., &c.

These individual adaptations of each element in the charm to the symptoms of the disease it is desired to produce, are nearer, in their hard atomic separateness, to the reflexes of instinct than to the higher co-ordinations of the civilized intelligence. The attraction for the primitive mind of these series of small operations, lies in the ease and simplicity of each one separately, requiring the smallest modicum of thought, and providing each time the pleasure of a unification,² the satisfaction of a thing accomplished, which, all savage experience assures, is perfectly certain in its effect.

The method as a whole seems to the modern mind infinitely wearisome, but it is much less wearisome to the savage than would be the effort to grasp and hold one comprehensive general idea as to the cause and cure of disease. To be equal to the strain of comprehending how one drug, a poison, could produce all the symptoms and results he aims at in his nefarious magic, or, as a more difficult problem still, how one drug could cure all the different manifestations of the illness, it would be necessary that the primitive should possess the co-ordinating mind which is on the way to the science and art of Medicine. This atomism or particularism in primitive reasoning, is thus an important element common to Taboo, Magic, and primitive Religious Ritual, the three main institutions or customs of savage life everywhere. It is in some measure responsible for that almost universal state of savage existence which we shall deal with in the next chapter, under the title of the

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 22.

² Chapter XXVI.

Integration of Custom. This mental characteristic accounts also in part, by the equilibrium which it secures between the primitive mind and its environment, between the savage and the conditions of his survival, for the long endurance of that integration in wide regions of the globe.

2. To solve his problems by action rather than thought, is a further characteristic of primitive man. 'In the beginning was the deed,' as Goethe said, not, however, as he meant it, because the deed was greater than the thought, but rather because for earliest man it was easier and less great. We have already noted this also as a quality of the human mind where it is nearest the instinctive, that whenever the mind is wearied of the effort of thinking, the tendency is to *do* something which will meet the situation. In Magic, and in Ritual—whether magical or religious or partaking of both—it is actions, not thought, which are called into play. Even in Taboo it is negative action—action to inhibit action. The distinction may be sufficiently illustrated by one salient example of savage custom, namely Divination, with its cognate form, the Ordeal.

The decision of his questions by recourse to birds, animals, and later, stars, is an expression of that tendency which we have found to be fundamental in man, to see power to help or hinder him in all things which are mysterious to him. The following example from Samoa, given by Dr. George Brown, is typical.

'If an owl flew before a company of Manono warriors, it was a signal to them to go forward, whilst the rainbow in front of them had the same significance. If, on the contrary, the bird crossed the path, or the rainbow was behind them, these were bad omens.'¹

One notes the simple, natural element in the reasoning, that the bird flying in front beckons onward; flying

¹ *Melanesians and Polynesians*, George Brown, D.D. (Macmillan, 1910), pp. 174-5.

across, it crosses, negatives, the expedition ; and the rainbow (most beautiful of omens) is interpreted in similar fashion. Here once more the savage mind is perceived, with its imperfect powers of co-ordination, as observed earlier,¹ seeing causal connexions, on the ground chiefly of likeness, between mysterious power in nature and in living things, on the one hand, and the events of its own experience, on the other. It is a further consequence of this sense of mysterious power in the objects observed as signs, that omens are not regarded merely as presages but as *causes* of good or evil fortune. As M. Lévy-Bruhl says ;

‘ If the decision of the omens is thus sovereign, it is not merely because they are considered to be infallible predictions. The reason is more profound : the favourable omen is a positive aid which is not to be ignored. It is not simply the announcement : it is above all the guarantee of success ; the indispensable guarantee, the condition *sine qua non*. It is not enough, therefore, that no evil omen has appeared. It is still necessary that favourable omens should be produced. In their absence nothing is done, even if it is disastrous to refrain.’²

It is an important point that the observation of omens is a substitute for thought ; it is even at times, as just seen, a substitute for action. The great chief, the savage Napoleon, the beginner of a new era for his tribe, who became a myth and legend to more degenerate times, may very likely have been one whose more organized and organizing brain left others to take the omens, while he, by titanic mental effort, produced a new weapon or tool, a new military formation, a migratory impulse, a better boat. In the Ordeal there is a practical method of solving problems without mental effort, which, so long as confidence is placed in it, keeps constructive thought and Law permanently at bay, or indeed far out of sight. As M. Lévy-Bruhl expresses the West African’s point of view ; ‘ Why

¹ See Chapter XIX.

² *La Mentalité primitive*, p. 131.

fatigue oneself with laborious investigations when it is so easy to get at the truth by making the vessel of *muavi* pronounce the verdict.' ¹

The Ordeal, as a substitute for thought and a relief from mental effort, has had an unconscionably long life even in civilization. The reasons are not far to seek. One is that it was reinforced by the religious idea—never thoroughly reasoned out, and generally the product of excited feeling or passion, as in the duel or in war—that the gods or God threw a weight, imponderable but decisive, upon the just side. This was for long the theory of the duel; and it was set forth with some ingenuity by Maeterlinck in a war-time essay. It is for multitudes of civilized people a powerful subconscious justification for war. Another reason is that the increasing demands in modern civilization for mental effort, induce fatigue, and therefore increase the tendency to fall back upon methods of judgement and decision in which thought is abrogated, as in games of chance and gambling. It is significant that recruits for the late war were very easily and swiftly drawn from the lowest stratum of society, in which the mentality and the environment most nearly reproduce the conditions of savage life, and that it is from the same stratum chiefly that those come who set their hope for the fuller life they are naturally seeking, on a war of classes or the wild hazard of revolution. There is probably no deliverance for modern civilization from the danger of reversion to savagery, except in the increasing prevalence and cultivation of the typical civilized mind, with its ever wider, deeper, more sensitive and sympathetic co-ordinations, and in the diffusion of a spirit—we should not hesitate to call it the Christian spirit, modernly interpreted—whose essence is faith in the unifications, both theoretical and practical, of that mind.

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 247.

Divination, then, and its special form of the Ordeal, are methods of solving their rudimentary moral problems, naturally taken by minds which are not yet capable of producing for themselves laws of evidence and judgement. Psychologically, they can probably always be understood as particular cases of the application of the savage conception of causality, especially of the principle that like is the cause of like, which plays so great a part in magic and magico-religious ritual. They are thus typical of the tendency under notice, to avoid or to escape from the fatigue of co-ordinative thought into the easier channels of action, which is characteristic of that primitive and savage condition of life which we name comprehensively the Integration of Custom.

3. A further quality of the primitive mind which comes naturally under the heading of Fatigue, is what modern psychologists would call, Suggestibility. The savage is remarkably credulous and uncritical as to the communications of his fellows. The first explanation of this which would occur to some anthropologists, is summed up in the phrase, the Herd Instinct. This theory, not without value in certain directions, must be used with caution, particularly with respect to the meaning to be attached to the word 'Herd'. In the extreme forms of the theory, the word implies close analogies to the wolf-pack or the herd of deer, which are exceedingly doubtful as representations of the early group-life of man. There is, it is true, a sufficiently striking resemblance between the implicit obedience of the individual in the tribe to tribal custom and the iron authority of the group over its members, on the one hand, and the instinctive unity of the herd, on the other, moving like a single animal all under one impulse. But resemblances in Nature are not always reached by the same road, as in the case of the branching coral and the tree, or the diamond and the sun-stricken crystal.

The rigidity of the Integration of Custom in the tribal life of man, is the product of intelligent reflection, rudimentary but real, hardened by tradition and fear of change into habits of the tribe to which obedience is almost instinctive. The rigidity of the Herd Instinct, on the other hand, is the product of instinctive reflexes, the only difference being that the perceptions of any one individual animal may start the reflexive circuit which sets the herd as a whole in motion. The association of animals in herds and flocks, therefore, is adapted to the small-brained, long-muzzled, long-sighted quadrupeds rather than to the large-brained, short-muzzled, short-sighted, hand-using anthropoids. The only apes which live successfully in real herds are certain kinds of baboons, which are very distant in the simian scale from the anthropoids, and are almost quadrupeds in many respects. Their brains, smaller than those of the manlike apes, yet denoting their kinship to the latter by being larger in proportion than those of many other animals, enable them to modify in a slight degree the instinctive operations of the herd in the direction of intelligence, as in accepting leadership, placing sentinels and the like; but that is all that can be said.

In the case of the anthropoid apes, evidence of the herd type of social organization is conspicuously lacking. The large-brained, eye-minded anthropoid, with its tendency to inward reflection, in becoming human, reached its life in society in another way. The long and comparatively helpless infancy sharpened the necessity of communication between mother and child, between both parents and the young. The early development of the organs of speech enabled this humanoid creature to call his relatives or his fellows to his help against an enemy or in the capture of the prey. Hence the communication of ideas, first in warnings of common danger, then giving information and instructions, and later,

plans for common action. The achievement of some great means of safety, such as the cave or the use of fire, would facilitate the gathering of the elders of the group for interchange of experiences and of ideas. There are few races, however primitive, where there is not the assembly of an evening of the hunters around the camp-fire, when tales are told of familiar or strange happenings; suggestions as to the problems of life, theoretical or practical, are interchanged; and even dim speculations struggle for expression against the limitations of mind and speech. Here probably is the quite natural source of those 'représentations collectives', those common ideas both as to the seen and the occult world, which dominate the thought and conduct of primitive man and issue in his magical and religious customs.

In these conversations and interchanges of ideas within the group, two lines of thought and experience would emerge. Along the first, that of communicated observations of simple natural facts such as the signs and tracks of game, there would be built up by instruction and correction from experience, that small body of accurate knowledge, often astonishing to the civilized, which is the savage's natural science. Along the other line, we meet with that power of his mind which was among the first gifts of his large brain, and which differentiates him very completely from the other animals, namely, *Imagination*. The specific work of imagination is the representation or vision within the mind, of existences which may have no reality corresponding to them in the external world. Man has, from his common inheritance with the animals, the perception of power in objects, in the simple experience that they are able to *do* things, which he classifies into activities which help or injure him. But when he comes face to face with things he cannot understand, but which challenge his attention because they do

things which excite his awe or fear, Imagination steps in, and dimly bodies forth to his mind, power in these phenomena, which is mysterious, invisible, intangible.

Here, then, is a subject of intense interest for communication between primitive man and his fellows. Thus are related the whispering sounds in the trees when no wind was felt, the bird-call when no bird was seen, the strange movement upstream of a black tree-trunk, the vivid dream of one's own death, or of the clearly seen dead ancestor ; and the simplest conclusion about them is not at first gods or spirits, but that there is *power* there, mysterious, beyond reach of hands and weapons, and therefore dangerous and somehow to be guarded against. There are two circumstances which make primitive man remarkably 'suggestible' to such ideas. One is that they are the creation of imaginatively heightened fear. It is vastly safer, it seems, to believe in them than not. Even civilized people 'touch wood' or avoid 13, because there is no harm in being on the safe side. The other point may be illustrated by the following passage from *The Jungle Book*. The village hunter, Buldeo, was explaining how the tiger that had carried away Messua's son was a ghost-tiger, and his body was inhabited by the ghost of a wicked old money-lender, who had died some years before.

'And I know that this is true', he said, 'because Purun Das always limped from the blow he got in a riot when his account-books were burned, and the tiger that I speak of *he* limps, too, for the tracks of his pads are unequal.'

'True, true ; that must be the truth,' said the greybeards, nodding together.

'Are all these tales such cobwebs and moontalk?' said Mowgli, 'that tiger limps because he was born lame, as every one knows. To talk of the soul of a money-lender in a beast that never had the courage of a jackal is child's talk.'¹

The 'inside' knowledge Mowgli had of the animal

¹ *The Jungle Book*, p. 97.

gossip of the jungle is, of course, normally absent ; and such tales as this of Buldeo to the wondering and believing greybeards of the community, and the naïve kind of reasoning, are unchallenged and accepted because it is impossible to disprove them. The effort of critical reasoning which could put these intangible phenomena to some searching test of reality, is far beyond the power of the primitive type of brain ; and the ordinary savage mind which attempted it, would speedily desist from fatigue. Thus would grow up the system of savage belief by an atomistic accretion of communicated experiences ; and thus also would be built up the practical methods of dealing with the perilous power in mysterious things, persons, and events. One and another in these informal gatherings of the group, when they are relaxed and at leisure to gossip and exchange experiences, describes the charm, the fetich, the ritual act which for him has been efficacious, or, if untried, seems likely to be. As M. Lévy-Bruhl, for example, says :

‘ In a number of primitive societies in which every one pays the greatest attention to dreams, the people ask each other every morning as to their dreams, narrate and interpret them : there is always at least one among them who has had a dream.’¹

We may sum up in three points the factors which make the mind extremely open to such suggestions, whether of crude speculation or practical method. One is the imaginative sense of unknown power, which was the result of the substitution of intelligence and imagination for instinct, and which drove early man to accept any avenues or means of escape from its perils. The second is the fact that the critical reason, and the pre-frontal region of the brain on which it depends, are undeveloped, and assent is given to such suggestions in a manner resembling the smooth flow of instinct. The third factor is the solidarity of the group or clan or

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 96-7.

tribe itself. In that close association, the perilous power, which is conceived of naturally as a kind of infectious and contagious miasma, would pass readily from one to another and threaten the whole. The psychology of the crowd in modern times renders familiar to us the sudden panics, the unreasoning, impulsive mind, the tendency to action rather than thought, the childish whims, even the cruelty and savagery, inconceivable to the same individuals apart from the crowd and its emotion, in all of which there is a reversion or return to a more primitive state of mind. Still more for savage man in the mass, the vagueness and indefiniteness of dangerous possibility heightens the sense of peril, and so the group imposes more stringent rules for Taboo, for the use of Magic and for the exact performance of religious Ritual, and severer penalties for violation, than would otherwise be the case. Disobedience to such regulations menaces the whole community : no man knows when the incalculable power may strike : no one can see the limits of the forces set in motion : and hence the only safety is in absolute obedience. It is from such causes, inherent, as we have sought to show, in the nature of primitive mind, that there is built up the immense and often crushing authority of the tribe and its customs over the individual. Thence it is that what we are now to describe as the Integration of Custom, derives that static and enduring character, and that appearance of complicated mechanism, which it shares, though on the higher plane of intelligence, with the Integration of Instinct.

XXIII

THE INTEGRATION OF CUSTOM

THE TRIBAL UNIFICATION

THE evolution of man in common with the rest of the universe proceeds, as Herbert Spencer was the first to affirm, by a series of integrations linked together by differentiations. We have seen reason to think that after the well-defined stage in the development of life on this planet which we have called the Integration of Instinct, there succeeded, in the history of human evolution, the great Integration of Custom. This might be called a subordinate unification within the still greater Integration of Intelligence, which embraces all of human life which is not within the realm of the instinctive. The Integration of Custom, under which all races which are at the cultural stage of tribal or clan organization, may be said to live, has been differentiated from the Integration of Instinct, by intelligence playing upon or working with the instincts as its material.

Intelligence and the incipiently reflective brain lead the higher animals, but above all man, out from the world of instinct into a larger and wider world. For the definite grooves and quasi-mechanical, reflexive circuits of instinct, there are substituted the vastly more varied reactions of intelligence to circumstances and the environment ; and alternative ways of dealing with these, such as aims consciously pursued, plans, and finally, for man, even theories, enrich the possibilities and freedom of life. The phenomena with which the instincts are concerned, and the instincts themselves, become the subjects of man's primitively reflective thought. Thence arise certain general modes of

thinking about the phenomena of experience, and of dealing with them practically, which, being accepted by man's social groups as meeting their requirements, become the Customs of his clans and tribes. But, just as the repeated and customary thoughts and acts of the individual tend to become instinctive, and to return to the unreflectiveness and quasi-mechanical character of instinct, so the modes of thinking and especially the practices of the social groups of primitive man, who has only just broken out from the realm of the instinctive, become customary, traditional, and weighted with the authority of the group, and thus return, within the integration of intelligence, to the unreflectiveness, the quasi-mechanism, and the unquestioning obedience of the integration of instinct. It is these characteristics which induce M. Lévy-Bruhl to treat the 'immediacy' of primitive man's responses to the ideas and customs of his social group, and the 'imperviousness' of his mind 'to experience', as constituting a peculiar mentality. They are, on the contrary, simply the restoration, through the customs or habits of the group, of the qualities just mentioned which mark the reflexive circuits and stereotyped modes of action of the instinctive stage of evolution.

In view of this tendency to sink back upon instinct from the hardly won ground of intelligence, it is natural, in considering man within the Integration of Custom, to refer back to the motives and conduct of his ancestral instinctive life, and to trace some parallels between the two. In the first place, then, the sub-human ancestor, as largely an instinctive animal, would manifest the power of the motive of Self-preservation. This would express itself, negatively in flight from danger, with the accompanying emotion of fear, and positively in the food-quest with its feeling of desire. The other motive which divides the interest of living things almost equally with Self-preservation, is some-

times called Other-preservation, and embraces those impulses and instincts to which Nature has entrusted the future of races of living beings. The most powerful of these other-preservative motives is the Sex-Instinct. Associated with it closely is the Instinct of Kinship, which begins with the parental relationship in the animal family, with its necessary care and even sacrifice for the more or less helpless young. This branches out into the various impulses of social and group life, of which one of the most important from our point of view is the motive of Self-suppression. This appears even so early as in the denial of his own appetite by the male wolf, in order to take the 'kill' to the mate and the cubs; and it culminates for the savage in his unquestioning submission to the authority of the social group, and the impressiveness for him of the danger of injuring the tribe as a whole, by any error or 'sin' of his own as an individual. We may now examine these motive powers as 'worked over' by the rudimentary human intelligence, and the results within the Integration of Custom, that is, as embodied in the Customs of savage man.

1. (a) The impulse of Self-preservation is expressed in man as in other animals by flight from the object of fear, and other natural reactions. But man is different from the animals in the possession of Imagination; and the first result of that immensely significant gift of mind, is the dim imagining of *power* in things about which there is any strangeness or mystery to him. Omnipresent fear compels imagination to visualize the mysterious power as dangerous. The substitute for instinctive flight from such intangible power and peril, is the Custom of Taboo. Taboos are thus essentially ways and means, often simple and often extremely complicated, of marking and warding off the dangerous power of mysterious things, persons, and events. The frequently elaborate customs of savage man the world

over, concerning the uncomprehended forces and occurrences in life such as birth, adolescence, marriage, death, and with respect to persons who have large indefinite powers, the sorcerer, the priest, the chief or king, are mainly varieties and foliations of Taboo. And since the fear of such mysterious power is felt by the whole social group, taboos easily slip into laws imposed by the group for its protection; offences against them are sins against the social conscience; and thus the sapling Taboo may be seen making in its growth towards the great spreading tree whose twin branches are Law and Ethics.

When the mysterious power or Mana in things-to-be-feared, which from the beginning was interwoven with vague ideas of life and will, rises into the stage of Animism and reaches the conception of personal beings or spirits, there is a corresponding change in the customary ways of dealing with it; and Taboo here yields to customs whose essence is conciliation and propitiation (or it may even be coercion), such as Sacrifice, Prayer, and in general, the practices of Magic and the rites of Religion.

(b) The other great impulse of Self-preservation is that involved in the search for food. The two supreme preoccupations of the animals, apart from that of sex, are the escape from danger and the securing of food. In the latter, the larger-brained animals supplement instinctive activities with the operation of intelligence. In man, reflection—which is not only intelligent but imaginative—upon the food-quest and on the animal or plant object of it, has two results. One is the accumulation of natural facts about the food-creature, its nature, haunts, tracks, and so on, which he observes and takes into account in his hunting. The other result is that, under the influence of what is called ‘an anxiety-complex’, the savage sees the creature in an imaginative haze, is impressed with its beneficence or

its incalculable caprice, with the strangeness of its coming and going, and thus looks upon it as invested with mysterious power, and even will, to bless or to inflict privation upon his life. His practical measures in dealing with this Mana in the object of his food-quest, comprise a great part of the customs of his Magic.

(c) This sense of mysterious power in the food-animal (or plant), together with the feeling of its necessity and beneficence, is one of the main roots of Totemism. The simple idea of being 'all-one-flesh' with the animal which when eaten becomes part of oneself, coalescing with the conciliatory attitude to it as beneficent, expressed in terms of kinship like 'father', 'grandfather', and so forth, may account for the idea of kinship between the totem-animal and the tribe. The eating of the totem animal is frequently forbidden to the group or individual whose totem it is; and this appears to contradict the theory that it was the food-animal which became the totem. The solution of the problem may be that, at the earliest and most primitive stages, the food-animal gathered to it the reverence of the tribe to which it specially belonged, and whose magical rites were designed to increase its numbers. But as it acquired sacredness, and at the same time the sense of kinship with it developed, the savage at first only ate it with expiatory and apologetic rites, and then under severe restrictions: and finally, pursuing his simple logic, revered it so much, and felt it so deeply his kin, that he dared not kill or eat it at all. The following quotation by Sir James Frazer as to a totem or kobong in Western Australia, illustrates the mode in which such restrictions may have encroached upon the original free use of the totem creature for food:

'A certain mysterious connection exists between a family and its kobong, so that a member of the family will never kill an animal of the species to which his kobong belongs, should he find it asleep; indeed he always kills it reluctantly, and never with-

out affording it a chance to escape. This arises from the family belief that some one individual of the species is their nearest friend, to kill whom would be a great crime, and to be carefully avoided.' ¹

Totemism is an early type of culture, and survives in modern times mainly in animal names of tribes, as among the American Indians, in the feeling of kinship among those who have the same totemistic name, and, particularly in Australia, in the restrictions upon marriage among clans and 'phratries', which are involved in the regulations of Exogamy. It seems probable that as man advanced in co-ordinative power of mind and towards the animistic type of belief, and thus came to conceive the objects of his reverence anthropomorphically and as spirits, the Totem would slip behind that spirit-shape and become lost to view. There are lowly tribes who can speak of animals as their ancestors, apparently without any sense of incongruity; and this we have ascribed to their imperfect powers of co-ordination; but the tendency to conceive of the ancestor as human or humanlike, could not but prevail in the end, and the spirits of Animism and the gods of later cults would supervene. The common meal in which the flesh of the god is partaken of symbolically by all the people, has probably its origin, as in Robertson Smith's famous theory, in the totemistic practice of first ritually and sacramentally killing and eating the food-animal before it was permissible to use it for daily food. As the god becomes more personal and spiritual in character, the sacrament grows more finely symbolical, until it is capable, in the Christian Eucharist, of expressing the purest mystical and spiritual communion. The humblest form of unification sought by man with the animal or plant which was his daily bread and became physically part of him, and yet, from the first moment of his thought about it, was invested with

¹ *The Golden Bough* (Abridged Edition), p. 689.

mystery and hence with sacredness, is thus lineally connected with that communion with God which may be independent of all symbols, and still is a deep and true unification of the soul within itself and with its universe.

2. The impulse of Other-preservation, within the integration of instinct, is directed towards the production and continuance of the race. The two main race-preserving instincts, the Instinct of Kin and the Instinct of Sex, are nowhere stronger than in man. One reason of this is his supremely sensitive nervous organization. Another is that the long and helpless infancy of man makes the protective, parental impulses and affections necessary for his survival; and, as regards the sex instinct, the human quality of imagination very greatly increases its power over the mind.

(a) The Instinct of Kin is mainly of importance to the Integration of Custom as creative of the solidarity of the primitive social group. The type of organization which may be loosely called 'tribal', is one of the distinctive characteristics of savage life, as compared with that of the civilized peoples which are organized as nations, states and empires. The fundamental bond of the tribe is that of kinship. The earliest social unifications were woven of the threads of blood relationship, and it is likely that the most elementary and at the same time immensely formative type of community, was that of mother and child. The latter position is ably maintained by Mr. E. W. Hirst in his book *Self and Neighbour*, in which he traces all forms of 'community' to the parental instinct, or with its associated impulses and emotions, the parental sentiment. He states well the connexion in human development between this elementary relation and the very highest unifications of the human spirit, whether within itself or in its social organizations :

'Just as in the biological phenomena of propagation the individual and the race are merged, just as in the process of

gestation the mother lives alike for herself and the child that is to be, so in that mental system we call the parental sentiment, regard for 'ego' and 'alter' is organized as a unity. The parent by caring for herself cares for her offspring, and vice versa. . . . There is duality of reference in the content combined with a reconciliation of interest. And it is therefore in the parental sentiment that we find the psychological possibility of that ethical love which, in the experience of community, effects the unification of self and neighbour.' ¹

Describing the psychological 'extension' of this sentiment not merely to the weak and defenceless but to every rational creature, Prof. Hirst adds :

'To enlist this fundamental nutritive and protective impulse on behalf of man as man, to regard your neighbour everywhere and anywhere as yourself, to experience a unity with all souls, is to attain the utmost ethical development of which the mind is capable . . . love, which has its origin in organic conditions, is capable of sublimation and extension, till a stage is reached in which it becomes a devotion to the spiritual community of all men.' ²

The unifications of the social group, based on kinship, are of all degrees of looseness or organic unity. The question why certain races, like the Australian aborigines and the Eskimos, have not developed a social organization beyond that of small clans and vaguely related larger groups, while others, such as the ancient Greeks and the modern dominant races, have grown from tribes to nations and empires, concerns our next chapter. One simply remarks here that it is fundamentally one of psychological differences. The lowest type of race, with ill-developed co-ordinative functions of the brain, is lacking in the power to make large unifications, not merely of an abstract character but of a concrete kind. Hence the organization of great masses of men under a keen consciousness of unity, tribal or national, has been left to the races which have the late type of brain,

¹ *Self and Neighbour*, Edward W. Hirst (Macmillan, 1919), pp. 149-50.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 150-1.

of large prefrontal development, and the civilized type of mind with great co-ordinative powers. The races which have been capable of holding one great idea in common, such as an aim of migration or conquest, an ideal such as that of a Promised Land, have been those who have broken through the integrations of clan and tribe, and created the complex unifications of civilized and cultured society. The peoples which have not that capacity, attain their unifications in simple concrete ways, as by totemistic ideas, names and ceremonies, minglings of blood at initiations, and rare and transient re-unions for the purpose of 'making the boys men'. Beyond this they may never pass for many long ages. It is, however, of some significance that the lowliest tribal organization is built up from reflection upon the instinct of kin, and has some relation to universal human ties and affections. The Australian does not, it is true, conceive of Daramulun as a 'high god' or as 'divine'; but he calls him 'father', as he calls his headman or his elders.¹ Thus, even he may not be permanently beyond the pale or grasp of a religion whose unifying principle is Fatherhood, and its social organization expressible in terms of the family or a brotherhood.

(b) The Sex Instinct is the concentrated essence of Nature's interest in the race and its future. It is strongest in man because of his highly sensitive nervous system and the power of his imagination. Of all men, too, it is strongest in the savage, who has not the developed co-ordinative quality of the mind, which directly imposes control and the inhibitions of reason upon these impulses, and which indirectly restrains and limits them by supplying other absorbing and competing interests. The lack of the control which is resident for the higher races in the prefrontal region of

¹ *The Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, A. W. Howitt, pp. 500-1.

the brain, together with the comparatively high development of the imagination, would probably have destroyed many primitive races, had it not been for the fear of the mysterious power of sex which imposed innumerable taboos and restrictions, and thus ensured survival. This terror of sex, which creates the countless taboos relating to women, to birth, adolescence, marriage, and so forth, is Nature's cunning substitute for the functional and seasonal limitations to which the other animals are subject. On the other hand, in spite of the restrictions imposed by the customs which are the product of the fear of the Mana of sex, absorption in the sex-interest is doubtless a very important cause of the stagnation and even degeneration of many savage peoples, so that they remain at a low level of culture, and never break out from the integration of custom and of the tribal life into the ways which lead to civilization.

This cause operates in several directions. The immense place which rites concerning sex occupy in life, absorbing time and restricting other activities in many ways, limits the time and attention which might be given to the improvement of the arts of life. The dullness and lassitude which, as a result of this preoccupation, have been observed to afflict the savage, would also put an embargo upon inventiveness, originality, and progress. The practices, moreover, to which this obsession gives rise, while they may chance to increase fertility, as some suppose circumcision, for example, to do, very probably have the effect of reducing it and keeping down the numbers of the race. There is something truly pathetic in the ceremonies of initiation among some of the Australian tribes, when most of the dramatic representations which shock the civilized observer, are really moral lessons, in which an evil practice is dramatized before the adolescents, and accompanied with an expression of disgust or reprobation.

tion like 'yah', which negatives the whole,¹ or ended with the threat, 'If you do this after you get back to camp, you will be killed'.² It has the pathos of the first crude struggles of ethics and moral idealism with the poor instrument of the savage understanding—the pathos also of the likelihood that the evil suggestions will have more potency than the prohibition, enforced though the latter be by the solemnity of the occasion.

Two things were necessary to the growth, if that was to be, of such small and primitive clans into the large tribal masses or hordes which, as observed in history, shattered the integration of custom and moved on to become nations and civilizations. On the one hand, there had to come the development of the prefrontal region of the brain and the corresponding power of the mind, which at once exercise control over the passions, and at the same time are capable of the higher mental unifications such as concepts, invention and discovery. On the other hand, there was necessary that knowledge of sex and its relations which would eliminate the excessive waste of life at its source, and ensure fertility and increase of numbers so as to form those masses of migratory tribes from whose conquests and settlements the civilizations known to us have chiefly arisen. It may be suggested, therefore, that the pastoral stage of culture, with its use of domesticated animals like cattle and sheep, provided that security of life and abundance of food which make the existence of great tribes possible, while at the same time it educated man in the knowledge of sex, so that the natural laws of the herd became the moral laws of the horde.

3. One important feature of the Integration of Custom and of the tribal system, is the deep subordination of the individual to the whole. Self-suppression, in the form of absolute obedience to the customs of the tribe, is so habitual as to recover almost the stability

¹ Howitt, *op. cit.*, p. 533.

² *Ibid.*, p. 549.

and mechanism of instinct. It is this feature which induces M. Lévy-Bruhl to say that all the ideas of the savage are tribal ideas, 'collective representations', and leads M. Durkheim to the doctrine that the essence, not merely of savage religion but of all religion, is worship of the group, that the object of religious worship is really the group itself. We have maintained earlier that these doctrines are exaggerations of a genuine fact in savage mentality. The fact referred to is that the sense of mysterious power-life-will or Mana in things, which we have regarded as the original germ both of magic and religion, naturally spreads from mind to mind in the social group, and becomes imaginatively heightened and intensified in the process. The group, therefore, with an emphasis derived from its common nervousness and the impressiveness of its mass, imposes its customary ways of dealing with these mysterious and perilous phenomena of experience, upon the individual.

The suggestibility of minds of the primitive type increases the effect of the authority of the group; and this suggestibility is quite different from the intellectual receptiveness of the cultured mind. For the savage will readily enough accept accretions to his magical charms, and further details of ritual which, it is supposed, add to the efficacy of the spell or ceremony; but this must be *within* the custom of the tribe. Alterations in custom itself are either simply inconceivable, or are suppressed as threatening the whole group with immeasurable harm. 'Precept upon precept and line upon line' may be added to the law of ritual and magical practices, and the good issue will seem only the more secure; but attempt to substitute the law by a spirit or to exchange the custom for a better one, and every hand of the tribe will grasp a stone or club to avenge the contumacy, and above all to avert catastrophe from themselves.

There is one form of self-suppression which has more of promise in it. There are probably no tribes which do not delegate some of their functions, as a whole and as individuals, to a special class of men. The simplest secular enterprise of the group demands a leader; some one must be first in Indian file going through the bush. So Palaeolithic man has his 'representative men' in those magician-artists who aid the hunt by their engravings and paintings in the cave. Thus emerges the 'Turrwan' of Queensland, the 'great man', the rainmaker, the witch-doctor, the priest, the chief, the priest-king. The authority of the tribe over its members is delegated to the authoritative individual. He himself, indeed, may be so bound by the authority of tribal custom that he can hardly move for taboos; and custom may decree that he must live only to be sacrificed at the last for the life of the community. But precisely in this emergence of the authoritative man there is embodied nature's inveterate urge towards variation, towards new and richer integrations. There is here the basis of leadership in some great enterprise, the possibility of some epoch-making invention, the tendency to develop a ruling class and found dynasties. A certain degree of mental development is necessary not only in the authoritative class but in the people generally, before these advances are possible; and clans such as the Australian are apparently too lowly to be capable, unaided, of the necessary coordinations of thought. But once this power arrives, the special position of this leading order of men provides a spear-point for the advance which breaks up 'the cake of custom', in Bagehot's phrase, and prepares for the larger unifications of polity and civilization.

4. It is these characteristics of the life of savage man which account for the stability of his condition, and enable us to include all his tribes, as contrasted with the civilized peoples, within the Integration of Custom.

What that static condition is in which many tribes, the world over and of every type, remain for long ages, and what creates it, may be summarized in a brief reference to those primitive Australian peoples who are a striking example of it. They have in the first place a low mental development, an archaic type of brain, deficient in the organs and powers of co-ordination. This has necessarily restricted the possibility of invention and discovery, which are in the nature of unifications, and has prevented such an advance as the domestication of food animals, or the simplest agriculture or practice of irrigation. The same undeveloped mind, 'suggestible' and indiscriminating, gives an extreme authority to Custom, and reduces individual initiative to a minimum. The customs themselves, particularly as to food and sex, which crude intelligence substitutes for instinct, probably interfere with the natural fertility and increase of the race, and thus keep down its numbers. The hardness of the struggle for existence in a harsh environment, with the Australian as with the Eskimo, reduces them further to small and widely-scattered clans. The small numbers in turn react upon the possibility of progress, by affording nature fewer opportunities of variation in useful directions such as the larger brain and more inventive mind. There are in consequence no large aggregations which might throw up some unusual man or genius or leader, who should initiate a literally epoch-making conquest of the environment, or set in motion those migrations which have had so much to do with the making of the great modern nations.

The influences thus seen in the extreme case of the Australian race are present, with variations owing to generally higher mental capacity and more favourable environment, in other uncivilized races in all quarters of the globe. The features of the life of such peoples, which keep them within the Integration of Custom,

while other races break out into differentiations which ultimately become the order and institutions of civilization, are substantially the same everywhere. In all there is the iron authority of the social group over the individual, suppressing originality, and accepted with an obedience resembling that of instinct. There is the overwhelming preference of action to thought, the tendency to solve life's problems by doing things, in ritual of Magic or Religion, instead of by reflection and theory. One adds the fatigue of the uncultured and unco-ordinated mind which falls back all too easily from the effort of inward thought to the outward act. Finally, there is the nature of the customs themselves, which, by interference with sexual functions and relations and thus with fertility and the life of offspring, by infanticide, exogamous and other restrictions of marriage, tribal wars, head-hunting, poison ordeals, penalties for infraction of taboos and the like, restrict the numbers and increase of the group. Hence there is maintained a sort of equilibrium between the race and the environment, in the struggle for existence, which gives a stability to the savage condition and tribal mode of life, which we have called the Integration of Custom, resembling that of communities of bees and ants within the realm of instinct.

XXIV

THE DISINTEGRATION OF CUSTOM AND THE TRIBE

EVOLUTION OF POLITY

CIVILIZATION has grown up out of barbarism and savagery. The ancestor of the cultivated man was the primitive man, as *his* ancestor was an anthropoid animal. The evolution of mind as of body is continuous, though considerable variations and even mutations may have occurred suddenly. It is thus probable that the primitive savage from whom the cultured modern is sprung, had his vague imagination of Mana in things, his taboos, his magic, his animistic religion, in various forms and stages, broadly parallel to those of the tribes which live to-day within the Integration of Custom. Survivals in the historic period and in the superstitions of our time, indicate that this is the path trodden by our forebears before they struck into the great highroad of civilized life.

If one asks what made the difference, why, for example, the Australian aborigine has remained as he is, almost as archaic in his way as his animal neighbours, the Marsupials, while a race of Palaeolithic blood has moved on through the Mesolithic and Neolithic cultures to the European of history and civilization, one may attempt an answer in which there is a good deal of speculation, but which leads some way towards the truth. It is that there are two great factors in the progress of man from savagery to civilization. They also mark two important lines of differentiation along which nature moves in accordance with her law of evolution, breaking up the Integration of Custom and

shattering the associated integration of the tribe, and constituting gradually the immense new integration—which is itself a complex of many subordinate and wonderfully varied integrations—of Civilized Life. These factors of differentiation are : (a) The Domestication of Food Animals and Plants. (b) The Development of the Co-ordinative Mind.

(a) The difference between ancient Egypt and Babylonia, on the one hand, with their colossal works of architecture and their delicate works of art, their elaborate tombs and temples, their writings, libraries, priesthoods, imperial officials, and dynasties, as disinterred from the sand and familiarly known to-day, and on the other hand, the Neolithic savage, the Papuan, or the Vedda of Ceylon, is simply the difference between civilization and primitive savagery. Six thousand years ago, life was lived in Egypt in a fashion which was vastly nearer to the life of the modern European than to that of the primitive tribes of our time. Customs there were, and superstitions were numerous ; but the Integration of Custom was broken up, the tribal organization was disintegrated, and the savage ancestor, or contemporary, had ceased to be regarded as in any real sense akin to the proud and stately lords of civilization. Yet that inconvenient and despised poor relation was in the pedigree ; and he is our peculiar interest at the moment. When, accordingly, we look for the reason for the difference, for the cause of the emergence of this civilized type from the primitive, we are struck with two features common to all the ancient civilizations, namely, the possession of domesticated food animals and the knowledge and practice of agriculture. These civilizations, in fact, were the creation, like all subsequent civilizations, of peoples who had discovered the use of flocks and herds, and sowed and harvested grain for food. Their achievements, indeed, have been in large measure

the direct consequence of these two discoveries or inventions. We shall endeavour now to trace what difference they must have made to the life and thought of the primitive hunting or 'collecting' savage.

1. The first result of domestication and agriculture would be a great increase in the certainty and abundance of food. The primitive hunter, or the savage of the 'collecting stage', is the victim of immense uncertainties in depending upon the life of wild creatures. In spite of his keen observation of their habits, they may elude him in a thousand incalculable ways. Hence the enormous part played in his life by Magic—almost more important to his mind, as M. Lévy-Bruhl insists, than his natural methods of capture. It is significant of change that domestication greatly reduces the sphere and application of magic. Instead of occupying a great part of his time with its rites for increasing the food supply, magic becomes seasonal; and the festivals of Spring with its sowing and its impulse of fertility, and of Autumn with its harvests and productiveness, concentrate in themselves his magical and, as magic merges into religion, his religious practices. Taboos also become seasonal and otherwise limited, instead of affecting almost every instant and movement in pursuit of the prey. The anxiety of the primitive savage about the food supply, especially in countries where life is hard as in Australia, is practically a 'neurosis'; and that atomism of mind which attempts to meet every contingency by some negative taboo or positive rite, is characteristic of his mental state, absorbing much of his energy in innumerable acts of ritual. The relatively great abundance of food at the agricultural or pastoral stage reduces this anxiety, and assists the tendency to unify the acts of magical and religious observance into large and comprehensive celebrations. These are more and more of the nature of festivals, limited to particular seasons,

connected with various natural phenomena, and associated with certain image-concepts and ideas such as life and death, sleep and awakening, burial and resurrection.

Of great importance is the element of *pause* in the life of the pastoral and agricultural peoples. The periods of waiting while the flocks are feeding, and the cattle are with young, and the crops are growing and ripening, are the antithesis of that impulsive, semi-instinctive hurrying to and fro which fills the life of the truly primitive savage. Psychologically, as already remarked, pause in the mind is the beginning of thought; and these times of cessation of activity are opportunities for reflective thought, of which the increasingly co-ordinative mind takes advantage, lifting up its eyes to the hills and seeing there Olympus or Sinai, considering the heavens and arriving at the astronomical science of Babylonia, the moon-worship of Ur, and the sun cults of Egypt. To the very primitive savage the powers which awaken his awe are of the nature of Mana, and may be attached to any small thing, the insect-grub he feeds on, the curiously shaped stone, the tumbling log in the river, anything and everything that claims his attention and is mysterious. The shepherd or the tiller of the soil, on the other hand, must take account of the large, slow, elemental powers of nature—sun, moon, and stars, the awakening of Spring, the bareness and threat of Winter, the weather and the sky; and so the unifications of his thought about these things, his simple nature-knowledge or science, the gods he worships, the ritual of his magic or religion, demand the co-ordinative effort of a brain approaching the modern civilized type, and increase by their demands that co-ordinative power.

2. The second great preoccupation of the mind of primitive man is Sex. The mystery of reproduction, birth, adolescent change and marriage, and their

psychological effect upon himself, fill him with the apprehension of dangerous power, and move him to enact the numberless taboos, regulations, and rites which characterize the Integration of Custom, and absorb so much of the interest of the tribe. The domestication of animals, however, makes these matters of sex necessarily familiar, lessens or removes the sense of their mystery, and thus brings them gradually out of the 'sacred' world into the 'profane'. Taboos against the infection or contagion of sex are of necessity relaxed where the sheep and cattle are concerned; and this has its reflection in less stringent rules and less elaborate ritual with regard to human beings. In the age of cattle-rearing and agriculture there is nothing like the fear of woman which made the Australian black kill his wife for stepping over him, or the touch of a woman's petticoat render the spear of the Sema Naga 'genna' or taboo; and the intensely absorbing customs of initiating boys and girls into maturity among primitives, vanish from the life of the pastoral and settled peoples.

The idea of the *impurity of sex* is a striking example of an integration, by the modern type of mind, which gathers together and supersedes numerous rites and customs of the savage, by their absorption in one unified conception with its correspondingly simplified practice. It appears, even in higher religions such as Buddhism and the ascetic forms of Christianity, like a palimpsest manuscript on which the first writing by the primitive mind has not been thoroughly effaced, and modifies considerably the later writing in its letters and meaning. The impurity of sex is a conception which could not have been grasped or formulated by the unco-ordinating primitive type of mind; but, once attained, it integrates very many fragmentary and isolated ways of dealing with the peril of sex-power, under one comprehensive principle, and as a consequence supplants

them by its own manageableness for thought and simplicity for practice. In place of very many detailed taboos upon the sexual conduct and general relations of the married priest, designed to ward off danger from the tribe, the Roman Catholic church says ' Celibacy of the Clergy ', and wipes out these regulations with the sponge of a comprehensive principle. At the same time, that principle is recognizable to the anthropologist as a refinement by the modern mind of the ancient fear of sex, and destined itself to yield to the more abstract and spiritual principle which treats sex as natural and pure.

3. An important element in the break-up of custom and the authority of the tribe, is the growth of self-feeling or the sense of his individuality in the individual man. The development of individuality is described more fully later: here one may note how its disintegrating influence upon custom and the tribe was promoted by the domestication of animals.

(1) Man's self-feeling must naturally have grown as he saw himself over against his dog to whom he was like a god, and over against his flocks and herds upon which he exercised his personal authority. The satisfaction children have in helping to drive sheep or cattle, or lead a horse, and the delight little Toomai of the Elephants, in Kipling's story, took in making Kala Nag, the huge elephant his father rode, lift up first one foot and then the other to his order, are probably an echo in the child mind of early man's pleasurable sense of power over his domesticated creatures. And the pleasure—the psychology of this is dealt with more fully in our final chapter—is the accompaniment of a new integration achieved over his environment, and at the same time of an integration of his self, in the form of self-feeling and the consciousness of individuality, in relation to the beings which he moulds and guides to his will.

(2) The institution of property was naturally fostered by pastoral and agricultural life. It was not created by the latter, for it existed much earlier. The animal keeps the 'kill' to himself, and with a growl warns others off: the lark fights for the area within which he builds up alone his airy spirals, and many animals respect each other's hunting grounds. Among the most primitive men property wavers between the simple communism which makes the stranded whale or the cluster of fruit-trees the property of the whole group, and the equally simple individualism which, in much the same fashion as the schoolboy claims the corner seat in a railway carriage from his colleagues by saying, 'Bags I!', claims the driftwood or a particular tree for oneself, and attaches a taboo symbol to it. The care of domestic animals, however, and the operations of agriculture, would necessitate a certain security and permanence in possession, which strengthened the self-feeling of the individual.

(3) The domestication of animals and plants, resulting in an increase in the food supply, brings into action the principle stated by Malthus: 'Population always increases where the means of subsistence increase.' The immense hordes which swept in successive conquering waves, in prehistoric and early historic times, over Europe from the steppes of Asia, had already arrived at the cattle-rearing and pastoral stage; and it is probable that these migrating hordes were the overflow of the pastoral peoples who had increased in numbers through the abundance of food, and become too numerous for the limited area of their original home. Prof. Teggart indeed maintains that a *shrinkage* of the food supply, in consequence of famine or successive years of drought, seems in some known instances to impel wholesale migration.¹ This, however, appears

¹ *The Processes of History*, F. J. Teggart (Oxford University Press), p. 69.

to us not inconsistent with the operation of the Malthusian principle just mentioned, since a rapid increase of population arising from the abundance of food, would at length outrun the capacity of the area to support it, and thus compel a surplus to seek 'fresh woods and pastures new'. At any rate, the swelling of small groups or tribes to migrating hordes would have two far-reaching results. In the first place, the size of the horde would burst the bands of custom on every side by the sheer impossibility of applying rules like those of taboo or exogamy, which worked well enough for small groups, to large and moving aggregations. As Prof. Teggart says :

' Briefly, a situation was created in which the old rites and ceremonies could not be performed, one in which the old rules of action were manifestly inadequate, and hence one in which the individual became, in some measure, a law unto himself. This, at bottom, is a fact upon which all history turns.' ¹

In the second place, migration and conquest demand leadership. Within the Integration of Custom there are representative men who are apart from the common people—the sorcerer, the priest, the headman or chief, the latter of whom may combine all these characters with leadership in the tribal enterprises. But the iron hand of custom is upon him ; he is sometimes more a prisoner of taboos and other customary rules than the ordinary tribesman ; and what he is able to do is prescribed rigidly for him by tradition and the authority of the group, which for its own safety hardly tolerates originality. With the increase of the tribe to a horde, the shivering of the earthen vessel of custom, and the flashing out of a large new enterprise, the powerful individual naturally comes to the front. Equally naturally, the new circumstances and necessities develop his individuality. The authority

¹ *The Processes of History*, F. J. Teggart (Oxford University Press), p. 69.

of the group is transferred to him, and secures almost the same quasi-instinctive obedience. The sacredness which clings like a scent to everything which for primitive man means power over his life, also passes over to the chief or king.

It appears to be nature's way at times to make her first experiments in a new species of organism, on a large or even gigantic scale. Hence the individuality of the early chief or king of the migrating and conquering hordes, was greatly aggrandized. Thus, for example, the conquered land and people were *his* land and *his* people as personal possessions. But the spectacle of this exalted individual *par excellence* before them, inevitably called to the Quest for Unity, the unifying tendencies in ordinary men, and made visible to them the ideal of power and dignity to which their own life was pressing. Thus, the sovereignty of the absolute individual lost its uniqueness in the course of history, and filtered down through the king's own family, rival dynasties, ambitious great nobles, lowly-sprung adventurers attaining the throne, the 'ablest man' of Carlyle, until the common man began to think that even he might have something royal about him. To describe the process by which the ordinary individual attained personal liberty, freedom of self-expression, and finally the title to as complete and unified a life as is possible in society, would be to summarize the political history of civilized nations. The indispensable preliminary to that process was the disintegration of the system of custom in which the individual was undeveloped and suppressed, being almost mechanically subordinate to the group; and in this achievement the crucial part was played by the domestication of animals and plants, leading by increase of food supply to the disintegration of the tribe, and the formation of large migrating hordes whose settlement in new lands was the beginning of civilization for most modern nations.

4. The Integration of Custom is thus broken up finally, and superseded by the new integrations of civilized life, through the settlement in particular areas of migrating peoples who have reached the pastoral and agricultural stage. The new unification, taking the form of nations, states and empires, may be described as the Integration of Polity. It is an advance from an organization based upon kinship and blood relationship to one which may be called, in a wide sense of the word, political. The tribe is merged in the nation: the migrating horde is welded into the settled state. The customs of the half-savage folk are differentiated into the law and morality, the science, philosophy and religion of the civilized people. Theories as to the way in which the transition was made from the savage and his customs to the ancient civilizations, are in a somewhat fluid state. It is becoming apparent, for example, that too exclusive attention to the civilizations of Egypt and Babylonia, has led to an exaggeration of the importance of the fertile river valley system in the origination of early civilization. As Prof. Teggart remarks,

‘ while at first it may appear that these beginnings have some relation to the irrigable valleys of rivers like the Nile and the Euphrates, further considerations will show, on the one hand, that there were valleys of this character in which civilizations did not arise, and on the other, that civilizations have made their appearance in quite different situations.’¹

A more comprehensive common factor may be found in a suggestion of this writer. The area in which every great civilization has arisen has the appearance of a cul-de-sac, or, to use Prof. Teggart’s expression, a ‘ pocket ’. They are, as he says, ‘ termini of routes of travel, and hence points of pressure which have been strictly determined by the physical conformation of the earth’s surface ’.² The migrating horde pours into

¹ *The Processes of History*, p. 49.

² *Op. cit.*, pp. 49-50.

this cul-de-sac, and, conquering the indigenous people, settles upon the land. But succeeding waves of migration follow ; and the earlier arrivals are pressed forward until they can go no farther, having reached some barrier of mountain, desert, or most often the sea. The first waves then recoil against the later, the earlier settlers strike back at the later invaders, as did Sumerians against Accadians, Babylonians against Assyrians, Greeks against Persians, Romans against Germanic tribes, Anglo-Saxons in England against Danes and Normans. If the migrants succeed in maintaining themselves against being annihilated or absorbed, in vigorous racial existence, they establish themselves finally in that region, occupying the closed end of the cul-de-sac, but still subject to invasion from the open end which spreads out into the wider world. The same free opening provides the opportunity for the expansion of the community towards that wider world, whereby, should it develop the capacity, it may extend its rule, until from a small city-state it may become a world-empire. From this situation several important consequences may be traced.

It has been recently observed by ethnologists that a collision of races, whether as between an invading horde and the native inhabitants, or between successive waves of invaders, appears often to be followed by an advance in culture, as though an impetus to intellectual progress were given by the conflict. We have already noted the observation of Darwin that admixture of races, in other biological spheres than the human, seems to produce an accession of vigour in the offspring. It provides a distinct impulse to variation ; and variation in the case of the human animal has set its current strongly towards the evolution of mind. It would not be surprising, therefore, if admixture of peoples through migratory invasions should convey an impetus in the direction of advance in intellectual power,

culture and civilization. This would provide one factor at least in the explanation of the truth thus stated: 'the dispossession by a newcomer of a race already in occupation of the soil has marked an upward step in the intellectual progress of mankind.'¹ Prof. Teggart does not stress this point, but emphasizes another and equally true aspect of the change. He states it thus:

'human advancement follows upon the mental release, of the members of a group or of a single individual, from the authority of an established system of ideas. This release has, in the past, been occasioned through the breaking down of previous idea-systems by prolonged struggles between opposing groups which have been brought into conflict as a result of the involuntary movements of peoples. What follows is the building up of a new idea-system, which is not a simple cumulation of the knowledge previously accepted, but the product of critical activity stirred by the perception of conflicting elements in the opposed idea-system.'²

The customs of the nomadic tribes and their authority are disintegrated, as we have seen, by the mere increase of the people to a great mass or horde, with new occupations and a new environment as compared with their hunting or collecting ancestors. The process is continued and accelerated by contact with new peoples and new systems of ideas. It is, however, an important point for the psychology of races that nature observes her principle of economy in human history as elsewhere, in that, when the new wine is past its first effervescence, during which it has indeed destroyed some ancient vessels, it is poured, innocuously enough, into old wineskins. In other words, each new integration formed by differentiation from an earlier, slips back easily into the moulds, runs in the channel, builds up upon the plan, of the old integration. Thus, for example, the Integration of Instinct, broken through by the varied activities of intelligence, yet reasserts its

¹ Quoted in *Processes of History*, p. 149.

² *Op. cit.*, pp. 151-2.

sway, when the customs created by primitive mind reflecting upon instinct assume the stability of instinctive reflexes, and the authority of the group or tribe commands an obedience from the individual which is almost instinctive. Similarly, it is remarkable how closely the great early integrations of human society or of polity resemble communities within the realm of instinct, like those of ants and bees. Like great ant-hills with their road-ways, ancient Egypt and Assyria have their builders, food-producers, soldiers, slaves, apparently doing their task with mechanical certainty albeit with intelligence and art. The authority of the tribe has become the authority of the state, obeyed as unquestioningly. The taboos have changed into laws, but they are 'as the laws of the Medes and Persians', unalterable—often not at all because they are reasonable, but because mysterious powers and perils are attached to the keeping or breaking of them. Mr. F. S. Marvin has described the special achievement of these early imperial civilizations as 'order and consolidation . . . based upon religion'.¹ They performed the striking service to human progress of organizing immense hordes of people into settled communities, and extending one law over vast territories. They also did an incomparable service to the growth of mind, by providing in that law a majestic generalization, which the half-savage tribes everywhere in the empire were compelled to assimilate; and these empires struck out once and for all, in the claim to rule the whole world, the truth and the prophecy that humanity may be organized as a whole. They did all this in virtue certainly of an advance in co-ordinative intelligence, which probably came at the migratory stage, and was accelerated by the settlement and a certain mixture of races; but, we would wish to note specially, they accomplished it also by the aid of a more primitive force. Like the

¹ *The Living Past*, F. S. Marvin (Oxford, 1917), p. 38.

alloy of baser metal which gives strength to the gold, there was, in the consolidating and organizing achievements of these empires, the earlier power of the absolute authority of custom and the tribe over the individual savage, which itself was a recrudescence, upon the higher plane of intelligence, of something still more archaic, namely, the obedience of instinct.

We are observing how the transition was made in the early communities which became civilized, from the tribal customs and modes of thought to the higher integration of polity. One feature of great importance was undoubtedly this, that the nomadic hordes, on settlement in a country, come to be organized on the basis of territory in place of the ancient bond of blood-kinship. Sir Henry Maine points out that 'for all groups of men larger than the family, the land on which they live tends to become the bond of union between them, at the expense of kinship, ever more and more vaguely conceived'. It is worth noting, however, that the bond of these early empires which made the first essays at civilization, was not so much the territorial one as the binding force of that power of authority, exercised from one centre, to which we have just referred, and which commanded vast stretches of territory, many scattered savage tribes and loosely settled communities, through the obedience to authority which was a habit of the tribal mind. The spirit of nationality, which would have interfered with that universal submission, had not yet arisen. Nations in the modern sense did not yet exist. There were simply hosts of tribes in the savage condition, and a number of nomadic hordes, accepting the authority of a great disciplined power which had forced itself upon them, as they had formerly accepted the authority of chief and priest and custom of the tribe. Most men had still in those ages the suggestible tribal mind, which made the willing slave or serf under the great ancient

empires, and, persisting into later periods, has made modern autocracies and modern serfdom possible.

The rise to power of these vast aggregations, 'tentacular' empires, which resembled the octopus in the disproportion of its far-stretching arms to the head and centre of the body, appears to have taken place in some such way as this. A conquering people settled in a new country was compelled to concentrate its forces in more or less permanent camps, which became towns and cities. The close association of people in these communities demanded organization and discipline, and sharpened wits and invention. Particularly the defensive force was developed into a compact disciplined army which, in taking the offensive, easily overcame the undisciplined tribesmen as far as they cared to march. Thus, the early civilized empires around the Mediterranean came into being, almost all beginning as city-states, and the rest in small areas with a capital city, the empires of Ur, Babylon, Assyria, Egypt, the brief maritime empire of Athens, Macedonia, and Rome.

The latest of these, the Roman, marks the transition to the modern type of empire or commonwealth of nations. The latter type, a higher integration, is reached through differentiations in the direction of nationality, budding out on the stem of the Roman system. The Hebrews, the Greeks, and the Romans themselves, acquired a strong national spirit, and vigorous suckers of the same growth shot up in the fierce struggle of Germanic and Celtic tribes for independence. The wise and tolerant policy of Rome fostered this tendency, in recognizing peoples as such, and giving them much latitude of local custom and self-government. This policy hastened the disintegration of the Empire itself, by stimulating the growth of the nations, as smaller but more intense unifications. The history of the Anglo-Saxon settlement in Britain

provides an excellent example of the process of integration of the nation, by the substitution of the territorial bond for that of kinship, by the development of laws for the allocation of land and for inheritance, by the replacement of individual, family, and tribal vengeance by communal action, and similar enactments of the community as a whole, whereby customs are superseded finally by law. Love of country, a common literature and community of historical tradition and heroic and passionate memory, with other influences, complete the unification of the national spirit and national individuality.

The order and law derived from the ancient empires, and in particular from the transitional Roman Empire, had much to do with the shaping of the polity of the nations. At the same time the tradition of world-unification which they had created, continued to hover over them as a dim, misty ideal of a new and greater integration still, the integration of these differentiated units of nations into great commonwealths, and at length into a world-polity. There is from our point of view a certain universal significance in the fact that the unification of the Anglo-Saxon tribes finally, under Alfred, into one kingdom, followed so closely the conversion of the English to Christianity, just as the unification of the tribes of Israel into one nation with a national spirit of unparalleled keenness and passion, is inseparable from, organically connected with, the progress of its peculiarly intense monotheism to supremacy in the national mind. The primitive tribe is never so deeply one as when under the influence of one common religious impulse. It is probably true to history to say that there never has been a force for welding one nation into a unity, and even combining diverse nations in a temporary unification of great power, comparable to a moral passion, such as the desire for justice or freedom, raised to a white heat by

religious faith in the supreme Power in the universe as upon their side. There is, therefore, some scientific justification for the contention that the surest sanction for any world-wide organization, any tentative construction of world-polity, such as the League of Nations, is the progressive realization of the supreme moral and religious ideal, namely, the Christian, of the Kingdom of God in the soul and the Kingdom of God in the world—which is a religious manner of expressing Herbert Spencer's conception of 'the complete individual in the complete society'.¹

(b) The external factors in the process which has resulted in the disintegration of custom and the tribal system, and in the creation of the modern Integration of Polity, have been the subject of the greater part of this chapter. Much less space may be given to the internal factor in the same process, for the reason that many of our earlier discussions have been concerned with it, namely, with the growth of the prefrontal region of the brain and the corresponding development of the co-ordinative power of the mind. It would seem that the racial types which have created civilization and accomplished the great co-ordinations of its thought and practical life, have possessed heads well-developed in the frontal region ; and we have just been suggesting the probability that it was this type of brain and mind which originated the domestication of animals and agriculture, and thus made the transition possible, from the primitive institutions of custom and the tribe to those of civilized society. We may now give a few examples of that internal, mental progress, which was parallel with and yet influential upon the evolution of polity.

1. We have seen that the primitive representation of causal relations and savage man's application of the idea of Causality, are so different from those of the

¹ *Data of Ethics*, pp. 73-4.

cultivated mind that M. Lévy-Bruhl concludes that they come from a specifically different mentality. This hypothesis is unnecessary, but it points to the fact that to the primitive mind the mysterious force represented by Mana, spirit-like beings, and spirits at the Animistic stage, are causes of countless effects which for the civilized man are due to natural or secondary causes. The savage is never quite without some idea of secondary causes and of the natural connexions in that way among phenomena, as, for example, he ascribes the minute disturbance of moss upon a rock to the tread of an opossum or a kangaroo. But the domestication of animals and care over flocks and herds would familiarize him with multitudes of simple and natural causal connexions, which took place without the interposition of any supernatural power. Thus birth, both human and animal, remained indeed mysterious and suggestive of dangerous contagion, wherefore he drove his cattle after parturition through the purifying Beltane fires; but he would escape from the curious failure of some savage tribes to make the causal connexion between breeding and birth of young; and familiarity with that connexion in practical pastoral experience, would bring it to the 'profane' level of a natural relation of cause to effect. The taboos concerning birth, therefore, would gradually vanish, as its laws became the subject of the early cattle-rearer's nature-knowledge and crude, incipient science.

In like manner, the primitive hunter finds mystery in the ways of his elusive quarry, and his anxiety drives him into magical operations which may concern every detail of the hunt—except where he forgets himself and becomes for the nonce the instinctive animal. But the primitive agriculturist grows familiar with the causal connexion between sowing the seed and the green flush which follows it, so that it becomes increasingly an unmysterious, that is a natural, phenomenon. The

fertility of the soil and of life is still incomprehensible ; and there is much that is incalculable about the larger conditions of growth and ripening, like sun and rain and wind ; and thus the primitive farmer has his fertility-rites, his bull slain at the Spring festival, and other ways of magically adding to the productiveness ; and there are supplications to the spirits or gods of sun and wind and rain, and sacrifices to conciliate them. Still further, the familiar and constant repetition of the sequences of sowing, growth, ripening, reaping, would bring even these inevitably out of the ' sacred ' into the ' profane ', and from the realm of the supernatural into the workaday world. Hence would follow the relegation of the magical and religious rites which were designed to assist the processes and to invoke the helpful powers, to a *seasonal* performance. They are grouped especially about Spring and Autumn, that is, before the process begins, when the endeavour is to throw into it an increased power of productiveness, or after the process is completed, in order to bring the products of nature out of the sacred world into the profane, and thus to make them available for ordinary use, and at the same time to express that gratitude to the powers involved, which is a ' lively sense of favours to come '. Here also, apart from these seasonal observances where magical and religious rites hold sway, there grows up a body of knowledge of the ways of nature, and even of those constant relations which are natural laws ; and here once more we have a beginning of Science.

The connexion between land settlement and agriculture, on the one hand, and the development of Science on the other, is clearly seen in the first great empires of the Near East, Egypt and Babylonia. As Mr. F. S. Marvin says :

' The measurement of land was an essential condition of the orderly co-operation of a large number of individuals, or of corporations, cultivating a continuous territory. The measure-

ment of time was no less necessary for the common performance of public functions, especially the religious ceremonies for which the whole calendar seems originally to have been devised.’¹

For Egypt geometry was the more important for the exact measurement of her inundations and of the irrigated land; Babylonia, with her vast plains and greater dependence upon meteorological conditions, devoted herself to astronomy, and made some few discoveries such as the degrees of the circle and the divisions of time. But, as Mr. Marvin says, ‘there is no more evidence in Chaldea than in Egypt of any scientific analysis of their observations, or of rational inference as to the properties of the bodies observed and the causes of events’.² These achievements were reserved for the Greeks of the classic age, who possessed the co-ordinative mind in a perfection which has never been surpassed by any race. Within their brief but wonderful creative period they pursue the quest for unity with unexampled intensity and delight; and the unifications they accomplish in science, in art, in politics, in philosophy, and in ethics—even religion, though a great, is only a partial exception—lay down the lines for all future advances of the human spirit.

The question why the Greeks, who were much nearer barbarism than the ancient civilized peoples of Egypt and Mesopotamia, should have gone so far beyond them in the triumphs of thought and art, is an interesting one and relevant to this study. They did indeed utilize the material provided by the earlier civilizations, but it is natural to wonder why they should have advanced so far beyond those who had the same material for a much longer time. In venturing an explanation we suggest that it was the very greater nearness of the Greeks to the savage state than the peoples of the older civilizations, which accounted for

¹ *The Living Past*, F. S. Marvin (Oxford, 1917), p. 42.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 42.

their swift brilliance in creative genius in every sphere. For, while those Greeks who came down into the peninsula from the north as migrating hordes, nomads of the pastoral and agricultural stage to which their Aryan ancestors had attained, and settled behind their *polis* or 'circuit wall of stones',¹ were so barbarous that they had not acquired an alphabet and carried their sagas in their heads, nevertheless, they had in a high degree the power of creative imagination. 'Intensity of imagination'² is, according to Sir Gilbert Murray, the supreme quality of the poets who created the Homeric poems which the 'Achaean' land invaders and sea pirates brought with them. Now, imagination, as we have before suggested,³ is a primitive power of the human mind, preceding the co-ordinative reason in order of evolution. Some races have it, which have a low frontal development of the brain; children possess it before the co-ordinative powers are developed. It is the earlier organ of unification, working mainly by the visualizing of a whole wrought, artist-like, out of the material of experience.

Imagination accordingly, was fresh, vivid, and intense in the migrating Greeks, as it was not in the more civilized Egyptian or Babylonian, whose mind was filled, like that of the imaginative child after he goes to school, with the facts and details of his more varied and complex existence. But the Greek had more than imagination. He had the co-ordinating and controlling intellect, perhaps in a greater degree than these earlier peoples, depending upon a high development of the prefrontal region of the brain, which is not merely integrative but critical; that is to say, its co-ordinations are discriminative, articulated, and organically related to the facts or particulars which are co-ordinated. Thus the imagination of the Greek wrought, for

¹ *The Rise of the Greek Epic*, Gilbert Murray (Oxford, 1924), p. 58.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 251 f.

³ Chapter XI.

instance, in science or in art, visualizing a whole, say a tentative generalization in science or a vision of some form of beauty ; whereupon the critical mind set itself to test the generalization by relation to the particulars, or to define the beautiful form in lines of proportion and truth to nature. The unifications of the Greek in the geometry of Eudoxus, the medicine of Hippocrates, the trigonometry of Hipparchus, the physics of Archimedes, the politics of Plato and Aristotle, the philosophy of Socrates and the Stoics, the dramas of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, are, like all works of genius, imaginative creations, with a certain primitive emotion and passion breathing fire through them ; but the calm intellect of the Greek, questioning, critical, discriminating, sets to work to see that the whole thus achieved is as finely and deeply integrated as possible. In this respect the classical Greek is the true, one might say, the ideal, modern mind.

2. The progress from the primitive to the cultivated mind is a change of emphasis from action to thought. At the purely instinctive stage of mental development, motor reactions following upon sensory impulses, without any reflection at all, fill the whole of waking life. The evolution of the cortex stops the even flow of instinctive reflexes, and in the pause thought is born. The intervention of intelligence has the increasing effect of delaying action, for the choice of alternatives, making of plans, and so forth. The development of the co-ordinating portion of the cortex still further detaches mind from action. Detachment is increasingly the characteristic note of the co-ordinative mind. The latter acquires a character almost of transcendence. It inhibits action upon one impulse or another ; it withdraws from action for long periods. It becomes a spectator and looks on at things. The change is most marked in religion.

Religion in its earliest forms is practically all ritual,

that is, magico-religious, action to secure the ends of life. The ritual dances of savage tribes, in which they represent the expected battle, the life-process of the food-animal, or the death of winter and the coming of spring, are not dramatic performances. They are actions designed and expected to produce the events they represent, as weaving is intended to produce cloth. The ritual dance is thus action of the whole people, partaken in with the utmost earnestness and emotion. Even when the action is delegated to a special class, the rest take part by rhythmic swaying, handclapping or singing, and share the frenzy of the dancers. The increase of small tribes to great nomadic hordes would make delegation to a small number imperative, and leave very many in the position of spectators, who would tend to be more and more detached from the ritual action. Miss Jane Harrison traces this development brilliantly through the evolution of the Greek drama. This again is admirably illustrated by the development of the Greek theatre. As she says :

‘It is in the relation between the *orchestra* or dancing-place of the chorus, and the *theatre* or place of the spectators, a relation that shifted as time went on, that we see mirrored the whole development from ritual to art—from *dromenon* to drama.’¹

The progenitor of the theatre was a level dancing-ground on which the whole people went through their war- and fertility-dances. As the action was more and more delegated to priests or other representatives, the part of the spectator increased. Hence the orchestra came to be placed at the base of a hill like the Acropolis for the accommodation of the onlookers.

‘The spectators are a new and different element, the dance is not only danced, but it is watched from a distance, it is a spectacle; whereas in old days all or nearly all were worshippers acting, now many, indeed most, are spectators, watching,

¹ *Ancient Art and Ritual*, Jane Harrison (Williams and Norgate), p. 124.

feeling, thinking, not doing. It is in this new attitude of the spectator that we touch on the difference between ritual and art; the *dromenon*, the thing actually done by yourself has become a drama, a thing also done, but abstracted from your doing.' ¹

The actual transition from the ritual to the drama was, as this writer points out,² mainly due to a decline of faith in the efficacy of the magico-religious process in affecting natural phenomena. We may add the suggestion that the co-ordinative mind of the Greek could not remain satisfied with such an elementary co-ordination, or causal unification, as between his ritual action and the processes of nature. By the time of his settlement in Greece he must have become acquainted with 'secondary causes' in the purely natural sense, and with relations of cause and effect, hidden from the primitive savage, between the sowing of seed and its growth, between the breeding of cattle and birth, and so forth. The fact that there are clear indications that the ritual dance, pure and simple, had been practised very near to the brilliant historic period, may point to the interesting conclusion that it was the mixture of races, when the conquerors settled down among the conquered people, which produced a sudden acceleration of development of the co-ordinative intellect. However that may be, the change from the expression of the deepest interest in life in excited ritual action of the whole people, to the attitude of spectators looking on more or less critically at dramatic representations by selected actors, is intelligible as a continuous process. The pouring, by Peisistratos and his son, of the Homeric sagas into the mould of the ancient ritual representations, made the transition to the tremendous dramas of the great writers natural; and it must have been less abrupt than even Miss Harrison makes it, on account of the fact that the epics, being in the minds of the

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 127.

² *Ibid.*, p. 136.

people already, had been many times enacted before their imaginations ; and thus the drama and characters of them only became more vivid and defined, by being acted on the stage. Finally, as in drama so elsewhere, the attitude of the spectator, released from action, looking on with co-ordinating mind at natural phenomena, produces Science ; observing the universe and seeking to make an ordered whole of it for thought, it creates Philosophy ; and seeing in that whole of things the higher integration still of mind, spirit, and personality, restores upon a loftier plane and with a purer emotion, the ancient tentative unifications of Religion.

THE HIGHER UNIFICATIONS

INDIVIDUALITY ; SOCIETY ; RELIGION

I. *Individuality.*

THE simplest living thing has a certain individuality ; it is a life-centre over against the world. The microscopic animalcule takes what it needs for its life and keeps out the rest of the universe ; its alternative is to die. Prof. J. Arthur Thomson, in giving the life-history of the Common Liver-Fluke, says of the minute larvae :

‘ In the course of their swimming they must come near or into contact with many different kinds of things, such as water-plants, sticks and stones, and various water-animals, but they answer back to nothing save the proximity of a little water-snail. When they touch this mollusc . . . they arrest their movements and enter into the body of the animal, within which they pass through a succession of juvenile stages. Now the point is that this brainless microscopic larva responds effectively to no stimulus save the touch of the one creature through which it can manage to continue its life-history.’

In plant-life the individual pursues its most perfect form in the interests of its race ; it lives—even where the flower seems a complete achievement in itself, an artistic whole, so to say—for the seed, that is, for the future of its species.

Within the realm of instinct the individual may be finely organized and yet, as in the case of the bee, be absorbed in, and wear itself out for the birth and care of the young and the continuance of the race. With the advent of intelligence the individual animal organism is still more deeply unified, and reacts in many respects uniquely to the stimuli of its environment. The tiger never hunts twice in quite the same way. The acqui-

tion of a superior brain to that of all other animals, lifted that anthropoid ape-like creature, who was the ancestor of man, out of the comparatively safe grooves of instinct and exposed him to a thousand new perils. His descent from the trees and lack of speed and strength in comparison with the larger animals of prey, made his life precarious enough ; but his dependence upon this new capacity of thought, with its imperfection and immense possibility of error, his high nervous organization, his exposure to fear and other nervous excitement, his vivid imagination, might well have made life too dangerous for survival. But the naked sensitive crustacean finds a shell ; and man crept into the safety of Custom. The new organ of individuality, his mind, escaped from its perilous uniqueness into a shelter resembling that of instinct, by secreting for itself the hard encasement of the customary ways, habits, traditions, and laws of the tribe.

Originality within the tribe is not unknown, as the rare and far-separated improvements in tools and weapons testify, as well as growth in the complexity of custom itself with growth in the intelligence of the tribe ; but the originality must be *within* the customs, on penalty of martyrdom for the too daring genius. At this stage the race is still supremely important to nature ; she is ' careful of the type ' and strikingly wasteful of the individual, within the tribal integration. It is as though, as in the lower stages of evolution such as plant-life, nature were intent—to use anthropomorphic metaphor—upon the continuance of the species for the sake of the emergence of some new variation, perhaps some great mutation, providing at a leap some immense advance. This advance arrived, as we conceive it, with the emergence of the co-ordinative type of brain and mind which characterizes the peoples which have created civilization, whether that type was evolved very gradually or as a swift mutation in con-

sequence, perhaps, of some crossing of races. This mental attainment is associated everywhere with that pastoral and agricultural stage of culture which equally universally preceded the great civilizations. We have noted how this social condition resulted in the disintegration of the tribe and the break-up of the Integration of Custom. We have also observed how it nurtured the individuality which it had delivered from the womb of custom. The man acquired a definite self-feeling over against the animals in his power. The dominance of the leader of the horde, the strong individual, set before him a unified conception of individuality which tended to stamp the soul of even the common man with its likeness, as a coin bears the ruler's image. In the ancient empires there was a supreme individual in the monarch, before whom in a sense the 'genius' of all others was 'rebuked'; but there was in all these great states an aristocratic caste which had the prerogatives of freedom and culture. It was one of the marvellous works of Greece to achieve a transient democracy in which a lofty theoretic construction of the complete individual became possible, conceived as completely developed on every side of his life, richly differentiated, as the Platonic Socrates imaged him, like a nobly organized state, and finely integrated with the harmonious order of the ideal republic.

The Roman citizenship asserted in a practical manner a peculiar dignity, rights and superior manhood for the Roman, and being extended under the empire to men of almost all races, gave a certain universality to the conception of the complete individual. The Stoics, particularly those of the great imperial period, like Seneca, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius, carried this practical element of universality into the theoretic sphere, and under its influence developed the Platonic idea of the complete and harmonious soul into their often lofty theories of the perfection of the individual

through life according to Nature, according to reason, and according to God. The difference between Stoicism and the inferior systems which preceded it, or coexisted with it, is thus expressed by Dr. T. R. Glover :

‘ Others sought communion in trance and ritual—the Stoic when he was awake, at his highest and best level, with his mind and not his hand, in thoughts, which he could understand and assimilate, rather than in magical formulae, which lost half their value when they became intelligible.’

The contrast is evident here between the primitive type of mind, relying upon action, ritual, and magic, and the modern, co-ordinative type depending upon thought and intellectual grasp. The place of Stoicism at the summit of non-Christian endeavours to conceive of the ideal unification of the soul, may be gathered from the continuation of Dr. Glover’s summary of Stoic doctrine :

‘ God and men formed a polity, and the Stoic was the fellow-citizen of the gods, obeying, understanding and adoring, as they did, one divine law, one order—a partaker of the divine nature, a citizen of the universe, a free man as no one else was free, because he knew his freedom and knew who shared it with him. He stood on a new footing with the gods, and for him the old cults passed away, superseded by a new worship which was divine service indeed.’¹

The Stoic unification of the soul within itself is a noble one ; but though it seemed a very gospel to its great exponents, it did not capture the heart of its own age, or of any age since. This might not prove it untrue, but as a matter of fact it points to its limitations. The things to which men turned in turning from Stoicism, in the period when its luminaries were the most brilliant constellation in the night sky, are significant of its failure to set the soul truly in harmony with itself and with the world. The Mystery Religions

¹ *The Conflict of Religions in the Early Roman Empire*, T. R. Glover (Methuen, 7th edition, 1918), pp. 56-7.

stand in striking contrast with it, in their charm for the popular mind where it sought satisfaction of its deeper needs. In the first place, they took the form of societies in which men and women felt themselves united in fellowship with each other and with the god, and rejoiced, as Plutarch says, in the sacred dances, initiations, and sacrifices in which they took part together.¹ This was a return to the more primitive mind and practice, to the tribal mind and the Integration of Custom ; and therein lay, no doubt, something of its fascination. But it gave scope to that relation of the individual to society, which Stoicism, in spite of the fine but attenuated idea of a common citizenship of the world, rather neglected. This social tendency in the Mysteries emphasized the extreme individualism of the Stoic, his isolation in the pursuit of the peace of his own soul, and his at times hard and almost inhuman detachment from the ordinary ties and feelings of family life and friendship.

In the second place, there is manifested in the Mysteries a remarkably strong desire for purification ; and rites of cleansing by water or by blood—as in the blood-bath of the *taurobolium*—played a great part in their ceremonies. Here also there is a return to the primitive ; and suggestions from the barbaric and savage world which the empire had embraced, considerably affected the character of these rites. There had, however, been developed in that society a conscience which was very far beyond the primitive ; for the ethics of Greek, Hebrew, and Roman had not been without their effect upon the average man, to whom, in the course of some hundreds of years, they had percolated down ; and whose type of mind in general was such as to be not incapable of this moral unification of the civilized conscience. Hence the very widespread moral

¹ *The Conflict of Religions in the Early Roman Empire*, T. R. Glover (Methuen, 7th edition, 1918), p. 76.

phenomenon of what we can only call a deep sense of sin, a feeling of the depravity of the world and of the soul itself, from which to be cleansed, by a symbolism which gave the effect of reality, was felt and frequently spoken of as a *salvation*. There are signs, in Seneca in particular, that the same feeling shook a little the fortress-like heart of the Stoic; but for the most part he sought his peace within, in the steadfastness and resignation of his own mind, and in the last resort in the open door of death—as Epictetus put it, if the smoke in the house grew unbearable, he could always go out. In this respect also the Stoic unification of the individual remained ‘caviare to the general’; and the Stoic himself remained a hermit inhabiting the cell of his theory, partly because its principles were at once too lofty and too abstract for the average mind, and partly because they fell short of answering to the whole of human need.

In the third place, the Stoics, in spite of some notable approaches to monotheism, and magnificent utterances about God and Providence, leave their ideas of the divine and of the relation of man to God, vague and indefinite, and only hesitatingly attribute personality to the Divine Being. As Dr. Glover says :

‘The Stoics in some measure felt their weakness here. When they tell us to follow God, to obey God, to look to God, to live as God’s sons, and leave us not altogether clear what they mean by God, their teaching is not very helpful, for it is hard to follow or look to a vaguely grasped conception. They realized that some more definite example was needed. “We ought to choose some good man”, writes Seneca, “and always have him before our eyes that we may live as if he watched us, and do everything as if he saw.”’¹

It is striking to find, on the other hand, how important a personal relation to some deity is, in the Mystery Religions. There is a grouping of the initiates around one divine personality, Orpheus, Serapis, Isis, Osiris,

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 72.

Dionysos, Cybele; as though there was a hunger, in that age, for a divine being who was not an abstraction, but who would come close to men, and stand by their side in a kindly humanlike relation. Thus Plutarch can say: 'For it is not abundance of wine, nor the roasting of meat, that gives the joy in the festivals, but also a good hope, and a belief that the god is present and gracious, and accepts what is being done with a friendly mind.'¹

The action and reaction between the Mystery Religions and the ideas and rites of early Christianity, have recently become the subject of more and more fruitful investigation. Without going into its results, it is clear enough how finely adapted to meet the trend of the human mind in that age, were the unifications of Christianity, first in its rich and full ideal for the individual soul, then in its unification of God and man in a kindly and intimate society, and finally in bringing God out of the haze of philosophy and the mists of high abstractions, into the definiteness of personality, and giving Him, as it were, a concrete reality through His manifestation and embodiment in Jesus Christ—vividly human as he was—which even the simple and ordinary mind of the age could grasp.

The further growth of the conception of individuality is so closely interwoven with the progressive unifications of human society and with the higher integrations of religion, that it is convenient to pursue the conception through the more modern forms of society and the later history of religion.

2. *Society.*

The history of the integration of society through a series of differentiations, is a history of the similar unification in the individuals who compose it. The

¹ *The Conflict of Religions in the Early Roman Empire*, T. R. Glover (Methuen, 7th edition, 1918), p. 77.

first form of social life, the family, arises from the need of the individual to unify his nature by satisfying the sex-impulse, and thus carrying on the urge of life toward its own continuance. Here the self is at once limited in freedom and yet enriched by obedience to the protective or parental instinct. Within the larger society of the clan, individuality is contracted by the rights and interests of others, but is expanded by the safety and power conferred by the community as a whole. The integration of the tribe brings the members of it into an almost chemical unity in which individuality is largely suppressed, and so great is the authority of Custom that, to some observers, there appear to be only a 'group mind' and 'collective ideas'. Within this shell of custom, however, the individual here and there contrives to grow. Customs themselves become more intelligent, the level of mind rises, and in some races the ground is prepared for an advance in mental co-ordinative power, and for a discovery such as the domestication of animals and agriculture, which leads to the break-up of custom and the disintegration of the tribe.

The new integrations of society after the diffusion of the migratory, nomadic period, were, as we have noted, first the world-empires and then the nations. Within the former the suppression of the individual by authority, as in the tribe, still continued, though a strong self-feeling had been developed in the migrating life, and was maintained by the dominant caste, and to a less degree by the conquering people as a whole. It was in the smaller area of the nation that the intensive culture of the individual was brought to perfection. In the rise of national life, as exemplified in the modern European nations, the self-feeling of the nation becomes the self-feeling of each of the persons composing it : its struggle is his struggle, its achievement of freedom his achievement, its culture his culture, its glory his glory.

Within each nation the process of unification goes on ; and the internal history of the modern civilized people is the story of the gradual broadening down of the possession of a free and rich individuality, till it is regarded as the birthright of every citizen. The task of the leading nations of the world, as pursued chiefly during the nineteenth century with varying success, has been that of completing earlier struggles for freedom of thought, speech, and religion, by securing for the ordinary man political freedom and individuality. The Liberals of most European countries dreamed that the attainment of true democracy would solve most problems.

It is by this time clear, however, that the integration either of the national or the individual life is not complete, and even freedom is not real, so long as the complex of conditions known comprehensively as the environment, denies the soul the realization of a full and rich individuality. Of this environment the other nations and the life of the world as a whole form part. The nation, no more than the individual, can attain salvation by itself ; and the hope of any people or state that it may secure a full and happy life for all its citizens, in independence of the rest of the world, is manifestly illusory. It was one of the products of the world-war, both of its exalted moods and of its practical experience of the interdependence of the parts in the whole of humanity, that men had a fleeting glimpse of the supreme integration of mankind as a whole, having within it room for endless differentiations, both of nations and of individual men and women. Not only poets and philosophers, but lawyers and business men had visions of a unification of mankind in a world-community. The late Prof. Josiah Royce wrote of this as 'The Hope of the Great Community', and identified it with the Christian ideal of the salvation of mankind ; while the Poet Laureate, Dr. Bridges, gracefully

expressed the idea that in the world community no nation need lose its individuality, in these verses :

Truth is as beauty unconfined :
Various as nature is man's mind :
Each race and tribe is as a flower
Set in God's garden with its dower
Of special instinct ; and man's grace
Compact of all must all embrace.

China and Ind, Hellas and France,
Each hath its own inheritance ;
And each to Truth's rich market brings
Its bright divine imaginings,
In rival tribute to surprise
The world with native merchandise.

Disillusionment, like a late frost on a warm and richly burgeoning springtime, fell upon these hopes, which had been so general within a year or two of the conclusion of the great war. But the disappointment of a too facile optimism need not obscure the fact that the twofold ideal of the integration of man's individual life and of his life in society, is part of the general order of evolution. It may, however, correct the tendency to imagine the process of evolution, where it concerns man, as a purely 'natural' and deterministic one, on the analogy of the lower processes of nature like crystallization or the growth of a plant. Physical and biological analogies are notoriously untrustworthy in the interpretation of human life, for the simple reason that there *is* development, that crystallization is *not* life, and the life of man not the life of vegetation nor of the animal. Briefly to trace the difference may elucidate the point under consideration.

Every growing thing normally pursues steadily its perfect form, that is, the most richly differentiated integration of its life. If one looks at an apple-tree in blossom, one sees how all its processes have made towards this beautiful end. But the pursuit has been

unconscious. The similar progress of the animal to the full unification of its nature is still unconscious, but it is instinctive, and intelligence now begins to have glimpses of partial ends. The peculiarity of man, the supreme quality of his individuality and the essence of his freedom, is that he is conscious of his unifications. He has vision in imagination of the ideal integrations of his life, can correct and order them by his reason, and make them his own, setting his will to pursue them. The full unification of his life presents itself before the mind of man—dimly yet really for the primitive and the savage, ever more clearly and insistently for the civilized man—in two forms; on the one hand, the perfect realization of his own individuality, and, on the other, the perfect form of his relationship to other persons, that is, of his life in society. The twofold ideal, expressed in Christian terms, is the kingdom of heaven within the individual soul, and the kingdom of Heaven upon earth, the society of such individuals.

This is not, indeed, a hope or ideal held only by Christians to be capable of practical realization. Herbert Spencer, speaking of man at the summit of development, says :

‘Of course, the implication is that the man who thus reaches the limit of evolution, exists in a society congruous with his nature—is a man among men similarly constituted, who are severally in harmony with that social environment which they have formed. This is, indeed, the only possibility. For the production of the highest type of man can go on only *pari passu* with the production of the highest type of society.’¹

It is, however, through the Christian system that the conscious pursuit of this ideal has come to be part of the evolutionary process. It has occurred from time to time in the history of modern civilization, that the Christian ideal, expressed as a Gospel, of a perfectly unified life in the soul, and less prominently of a finely integrated

¹ *The Data of Ethics*, p. 73.

society, church or brotherhood, has been grasped afresh by the faith of men, and has swept the trend of human thought and effort in the direction of these ends. The dynamic in such cases has been a faith. Men believed in a goodness and a harmony in the soul as a realizable thing; and they believed that those whose life was thus nobly integrated could live in a brotherly community.

There is certainly a powerful encouragement to pursue the endeavour after a more and more unified life for the individual and for society, in the faith, which may be purely scientific, that the universe is on the side of that endeavour, and that in it man is continuing consciously the formerly unconscious evolutionary process of integration through differentiation. But there is no very strong defence there against disillusionment and scepticism in difficult times. There are, moreover, pessimists enough who assure us that the earth will soon be overcrowded, without sufficient food to go round, and who hint that it has been a mistake to abandon the motives of the jungle and the decimating methods of the tribal stage. In truth there never has been, and there is not, any dynamic to move men to seek the individual and corporate betterment of mankind, to compare with the faith Jesus taught that, because God is our Father and we are His children, to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness would be to have all things, even those which meet material necessities, added unto us. There are probably also no men who will take up the task of securing an inner harmony in their own lives, and organizing the world so as to bring that harmony into every life, with such unconquerable hope as those who have the faith that the ideal of the unification of the soul and of human life exists for the mind of God, and that it is one of the ways in which the personal Spirit of the universe seeks the unification of His own Divine life, or, in familiar terms, the satisfaction of His own mind and heart.

3. *Religion.*

In our discussion of Animism we traced the evolution of man's conception of spirits and gods from their earliest form, the generalized image-concept of Mana. That evolution is a process of unification which reflects the growing enrichment and integration of man's mind, and also the increasing unification and order of his outward life. With the lessening of *atomism*, restless disconnectedness of both life and thought, and a gain of co-ordinating power in his mind, together with opportunity for reflection such as comes at the pastoral and agricultural stage of development, religion begins to escape from action and magical ritual into more inward forms created by thought and imagination; and concrete representations of spirit, like the miniature soul and a plurality of souls, are replaced by more and more definitely grasped abstractions such as the invisible, the intangible, and the unseen world. The soul ceases to be conceivable as a bee or a lizard, and is figured as wind, breath, *spiritus*, ghost. For peoples like the Aryans before they were diffused into the various races of the stock, pastoral and agricultural life directed attention to the vast phenomena of nature—earth, sky, sun, moon, constellations; and having minds capable of such co-ordinations, they formed conceptions like the Earth-Mother and the Sky-Father. It is some small justification of Mr. Max Müller's discredited theories that these large conceptions were steps towards 'the idea of the infinite'.

Not the only way, but one of the ways, in which a personal god arises, is, as Miss Harrison shows, the transference to the god—originally a fertility-spirit represented by an animal, the sacred bull—of the personality of the youth who led the ritual Spring dance out of which arose the cult of Dionysos.¹ So Prof.

¹ *Epilegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, pp. 28 f.

Gilbert Murray says that there was a period in which 'there was no personal god. There was the tribal blood ; there was also the live animal that bore in it the life of the tribe, set apart and consecrated, till it became full of magical vitality. The personal god seems to have been made by abstraction and " projection " out of this magical mana, out of the ritual dance, the desires and fears of the tribe.' ¹ This is probably true in particular cases, though it is not universally the origin of personal spirits and gods. In Mana itself, as we have seen, there is a suggestion of life and will as well as power, derived from primitive man's own sense of activity, of *doing things* ; and when his self-feeling, his consciousness of individuality, had developed so far as it had done at the agricultural stage, the idea of soul, of quasi-personal spirit, separate from body in himself or other beings, hardly needed the ritual association of the human King of the May or leader of the dance, to make its ' projection ' possible.

Man's dawning conception of personality in himself and in his spirits and gods, is a unification to which his mind approaches along many avenues. It is, however, striking that the universal evolutionary process which embraces all nature and human life, should apparently culminate in personality, which, according at least to our common evaluations of the moral and spiritual, is the highest and most differentiated integration of which life, so far as we know, is capable. As Sir Henry Jones said :

' It is becoming more and more clear that, in interpreting the natural world, its most complex, and, it is believed, its highest and most comprehensive and marvellous product, namely, an animal that thinks and distinguishes between right and wrong, cannot be left out of account, as has been done by science in the past. Nay more, man's meaning, which is ultimately spiritual, may best convey the final meaning of his world.' ²

¹ *The Rise of the Greek Epic*, p. 62.

² *A Faith that Enquires* (Macmillan, 1922), p. 113.

If one glances back upon the world-process and observes inorganic and organic nature apparently making throughout its course, unconsciously and then instinctively, and then increasingly with the aid of intelligence and conscious pursuit, towards the highest integration of personality with its rich differentiation in knowledge, in inward beauty and harmony, and in goodness, it is at least worth considering as a hypothesis, that the meaning of it all may be found in that final, or at all events highest, form of moral and spiritual personality. There are other hypotheses, worthy of all respect ; and this, like any other, stands, as we believe it does stand, by its success in interpreting the facts of existence.¹

There are thus two ways in which the idea of personal spirits and gods grows in definiteness. One is that to which we have just referred, through the unification of man's own mind and of his individuality in general : the other is through the unifications of his outward life, the organization of his societies. (*a*) The former appears in the anthropomorphic conceptions of the gods, who, for the Greeks for example, before they were subjected by the great thinkers to critical and ethical standards, were little better than larger and less responsible human beings. The Hebrews were not so bound to anthropomorphism as the Greeks, partly because they had not the art of the latter which fixed their gods in beautiful human shapes, and partly because Yahweh was very early conceived as unrepresentable by outward forms, and became more and more the unseen and transcendent deity. Even He, however, in the earlier writings is humanlike in character as a 'jealous God', revengeful, 'a man of war'. But a more pleasing and fruitful aspect of Hebrew anthropomorphism is the close personal relationship described as maintained between Yahweh and certain great human figures of the nation's history. Whether the

¹ *A Faith that Enquires* (Macmillan, 1922), pp. 103-4.

stories of Abraham, Jacob, and Joseph are tribal sagas or not, the writers or composers of the tales were able to conceive of them as individual men who walked, conversed and strove with, and served, a personal God. The same relation continued in the prophets, who felt themselves so intimate with Yahweh that they came forth from his presence and gave their message as, 'Thus saith Yahweh.' It was this close personal relation with the god, together with the high ethical conception of Yahweh, from the beginning of the prophetic period or from as early as the ninth century B.C., which made possible the extraordinary detachment of the great prophets of Israel from the ordinary motives and prejudices of patriotism. Keen lovers of their country, and poignantly sensitive to their nation's shame and suffering, they were so intent upon the mind and will of God that they saw clear-eyed, and pronounced with the inexorableness of Fate, the judgements which meant the external ruin of their nation, though they also led to its spiritual service to the world as a whole. In the earlier Biblical writings, the religion of Israel is 'henotheistic', or, to use the word of Archdeacon Charles, 'monolatrous',¹ that is, Yahweh is a god among other gods, each of which is the deity of a particular land or people. But the great prophets far transcend this: and the significance is seldom emphasized sufficiently of their conception of Yahweh as creator of the universe, having, to use one of their favourite metaphors, the material of the earth and the heavens, and the nature of man and human history, under his hands like the clay of the potter, shaping them according to his mind and purpose. It is the combination of this universal conception of the one deity, together with the high ethical elements of righteousness, truth, mercy, and sympathy, which the prophets associated with it,

¹ *Eschatology, Hebrew, Jewish, and Christian*, R. H. Charles (A. and C. Black, 2nd edition), p. 15.

and also that humanlikeness or personal anthropomorphism which we have just described, that kindly nearness and friendly contact of the god with humanity—it is this combination of qualities which makes the religion of Israel the true parent of the universal religion of Christianity.

(b) Man's unification of his external life, especially of his forms of society, is reflected in his gods ; it is indeed influential upon his ideas of them. We have noted this tendency in the tribal form of society, and its effects chiefly on the animistic stage of religion.¹ Subsequently the national unity has its counterpart in the national god ; the world-empire is rarely without some idea of a world-god, whether like a grotesque shadow, as in the deification of such an emperor as Nero, or as a philosophic unification like that of the Stoics, or as a world-gospel in the case of Christianity. In monarchical systems of government the tendency is to conceive a hierarchy of gods, with one chief or supreme god over all. The great god is often a unification of several local gods, which were the deities of incorporated peoples. In the case of the Greeks, the philosophic people *par excellence*, and the Hebrews, the similarly religious people, of the immediately pre-Christian period, there is a significant parallelism between their political unifications, on the one hand, and their religious unifications, on the other, as well as in their corresponding disunities and disintegrations. It is worth while to glance at this parallelism.

(1) Dr. L. R. Farnell remarks upon the religious ideas in Homer thus :

‘The Religion of the Homeric poems is not merely tribal, not even merely civic. The high god and some of those beneath him are recognized by all the different tribes, even by the alien races of Asia Minor. Zeus has, in fact, almost the status of a world-deity, and his name becomes at times a synonym for θεός, a vaguer

¹ See Chapter XIV.

designation of universal godhead ; and many of Homer's religious utterances could be adapted to a world-religion.' ¹

This tendency to a vague monotheism probably represents the unity of the ' Achaeans ' as migrating, conquering, and mainly pastoral hordes, such as they were in the pre-Homeric time. The representation, it must be noted, is heightened and refined by the poetic genius of a slightly later period. The settlement in Greece, by various waves of immigration and in various regions, broke up the loose unity of the tribal horde ; and, when the different city-states with their agricultural surroundings emerge, they are seen to have lost almost completely that early but vague universal element from their religion. A number of autochthonous gods, derived from the conquered peoples, steal into the pantheon, especially fertility-spirits and agricultural deities like Dionysos, which either add themselves to the company of the old gods, or add their characteristics to the deities with whom they coalesce. There is confusion enough for a time, and a certain inrush of the primitive and barbaric, in legend and mythology, which is disconcerting to Plato's imaginary legislators, and provides material for the dramatists of the great period to set their problems. There were tentative efforts towards religious unity, as in the common reverence for the oracle at Delphi and in the idea of the Pan-Hellenic Zeus ; but these were defeated by the internecine strife which thrust the states apart. The statement of Dr. Farnell is significant :

' The title, however, which in the later historic period best expressed the ideal of a united Greece, an ideal realized to some extent by its religion, but never by its politics, was that of Zeus Panhellenios.' ²

By the time when the world-empire of Alexander

¹ *The Higher Aspects of Greek Religion*, L. R. Farnell, pp. 92-3.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 94.

might have suggested the conception of a world-god, the idea had already arrived by purer channels. Indeed Alexander is said to have proclaimed his own deification, the transient Brocken-mist of his empire throwing up that simulacrum of superhuman greatness. But already the science, philosophy and ethic of Greece in the classic period, had distinguished between 'the One' and 'the many',¹ had a vision of truth as an 'absolute',² spoke of the 'good' as supreme, and hardly escaped calling it a person.³ Hence the way was clear to the Stoic with his one Nature, one Reason, one God. As Prof. Hopkins says :

'There passed forth from this period into the coming greater religion of the world many streams of thought and cultural practices. The idea of a world-religion, of the brotherhood of man, the missionary spirit (in Orphism), these were all pre-Christian. Bloody sacrifice had been condemned by the Pythagoreans and by Heraclitus. The acceptable sacrifice was already a pure heart. The thought that man was of God and that God was one, was current before Christian theology began.'⁴

(2) There is a similar parallelism between the social and religious history of Israel. The Biblical narrative is probably accurate in ascribing to the nomadic people under the leadership of Moses, a common worship of Yahweh. With this god of a pastoral people, who may have been associated with thunder, storm and cloud, and thus had a certain freedom from the grossly material and affinity with the impalpable and invisible, the horde of Israel came from the desert to conquer Canaan and become an agricultural people. In the sectional wars of the conquest, and in the succeeding struggles for supremacy among the tribes themselves, the vaguely monotheistic common worship of Yahweh is not lost entirely, but submerged beneath an inrush of

¹ Plato's *Republic* (Jowett), Bk. VII, 525.

² *Ibid.*, Bk. VI, 484.

⁴ *History of Religions*, p. 510.

³ *Ibid.*, Bk. VI, 506.

the local 'gods of the land', the fertility-spirits and agricultural deities of the conquered race. The achievement of national unity under the monarchy of David and Solomon is accompanied by a revival of monotheism, with its centre in the temple in the capital city. Had Solomon's extensive kingdom expanded in time under a dynasty, and in space as a world-empire resembling its great neighbours, Israel might have acquired and rested in some low and unethical conception of world-deity, in the form of an autocratic, supreme chief god or even of a deified world-emperor, such as came to most of the ancient conquering world-states. It is not, however, along that road, as the history of these empires plainly shows, that a moral and spiritual monotheism is reached.

In the case of Israel, that great unification in religion was attained by the way of outward failure and national suffering. In those puny attempts at diplomacy and world-politics from which Isaiah did so much to try to dissuade her, playing off, as she thought, Egypt and Assyria or Babylon against each other, the nation was crushed between the upper and nether millstones. The Exile, however, in which it all ended, or seemed to end, was the beginning of a new and richer life. The prophets had insisted upon the ethical character of Yahweh and upon the ethical conditions of his favour to Israel. With that detachment from the common impulses of patriotism on which we have remarked, they prophesied disaster for the nation in the course it was pursuing; and when destruction came, declared it to be the just judgement of God. As Dr. Charles says :

' Although the preachers of the destruction of the nation of Israel, the prophets became the saviours of its religion. Through their living communion with God, they made it known, in terms that could never be forgotten, that Yahwé pursued His own righteous purposes independently of Israel. Thus it was that Yahwism did not perish with the nation, and that true

religion survived the destruction of the state. In the religion thus enfranchised from national limitations, the individual becomes the religious unit, and is brought into immediate communion with God. Thus the way is prepared for the coming of Christianity.'¹

The Jewish people, accordingly, brought back with them from exile three great unifications. The first was an intense monotheism, which, through the profoundly ethical conception of Yahweh, and through the idea of His guidance of history in making even the empires serve Him, had the potentiality of a universal religion. The second unification was the value to God, and hence the intrinsic worth, of the individual. It was in the first instance the individual Israelite, to whom, with the shattering of the nation and his dispersion throughout the world, the special favour of God was transferred; but the moral and spiritual conditions were never far away, and the germ of the universal was there. The great achievement here is the direct personal relation between the supreme God and the individual soul, to which there is no parallel in any religion, except the Christianity which springs from this. The third integration is the society of such individuals, whose unifying bond is not so much the spirit of nationality or the patriotism of the land, as faith in Yahweh, so that, to anticipate a Paulinism, men are not so much the children of Abraham as the children of Abraham's faith.

From the position we have taken up throughout this study it may have become clear that in our opinion the supreme answer to man's Quest for Unity is to be found in Christianity, the greater child—as to its human parentage—of Judaism. In what we call comprehensively 'the Spirit of Christ', which is not only of the first age of Christianity, nor only in the words of Jesus, nor in the things he did, nor in his memory, nor in his

¹ *Eschatology*, p. 17.

living presence, but in all these and indefinitely more, there is, to our mind, the highest expression of that creative power which is in the process of evolution, and moves on by differentiation from integration to higher integration. When we represent to ourselves the highest unification of Religion, it appears to us that the idea of God is never so rich in meaning, so alluring in mystery and yet so satisfying in content, in a word, so finely integrated and so deeply and fully differentiated, as when that representation is seen within the personality of Jesus Christ, or his personality is seen within that representation. We can conceive no fuller and richer individuality, no character more harmonious within or more vigorously active towards the world, than any human personality which has taken into itself, to the utmost that is possible, the essential spirit of the Son of Man. And we imagine there could be no human society more deeply harmonious, more varied in its activities, more devoted to truth, beauty, and goodness, than one which really approaches to the kingdom of Heaven upon earth of which Christ is King.

UNIFICATION AND HAPPINESS

THE place of happiness in life is a familiar problem in human thought. It has been the subject of one age-long philosophy, and has played a leading role in all the others. It is needless to mention its importance in Religion, in all religions. Even in Buddhism, albeit negatively, happiness is central. Some would say that these remarks are trite, because the quest for happiness is the mainspring of all man's activities. Other philosophers, however, would contest this ; and the ancient but inveterate controversy between Idealism and Hedonism would be resumed : the never-failing problem of the relation of Duty to Pleasure, of Goodness to Happiness, would once more occupy the stage. We have been engaged in this work in the observation of another quest, the Quest for Unity. Some light may be thrown on the nature of both these pursuits, and also upon the philosophical question to which we have referred, by considering the relation between them.

Some connexion is evident at the first glance. The well-known Christian phrase, for example, ' the kingdom of Heaven,' represents a unification, with an association of happiness. In its two forms in the Christian system, the kingdom of Heaven in the soul and the kingdom of Heaven as a society, there is in each a particular form of unity, which bears with it, like a rose its fragrance, happiness. This is certainly not a unique discovery or possession of Christianity. It is scarcely necessary to recall that the Socrates of Plato found harmony, a finely ordered unity, both in the ideal state and in the virtues of the nobly self-governed soul ; and that harmony was his conception of the happy life and

the happy republic. We have noted that in our own age Herbert Spencer spoke of 'complete life in a complete society'; in which completeness of richly unified life he, no doubt, included happiness as the crowning capital of the pillar. In fact, it ought not to surprise us that this connexion between unity in men and among men, on the one hand, and harmony or peace or happiness, on the other, has occupied so much of the best of human thought, since Unification, as we have been illustrating all through, plays so great a part in all the processes, especially the creative processes, of nature and of human life, and indeed describes, as comprehensively as any word can, the essential goal and tendency of the whole creative process of evolution. The plot thickens, the affair becomes more interesting, when one discovers in the realm of Biology very early associations of unification with pleasure among living things, while the highest unifications of the human soul, which are moral and spiritual, frequently blossom into happiness. In fact, a glance along the evolutionary process shows these two, unification and happiness, singularly linked together, biologically, from the very beginnings of sentient life right on to the purest and fullest integrations of which man is capable.

It may be well to trace the first term of this interesting relation through some stages of the evolutionary process, in order to observe the nature and working of the principle of unification, in ascending degrees of complexity. Assuming, then, the Nebular Hypothesis, the vague, undifferentiated mass of the nebula is seen being differentiated to form the new integrations of suns and potential planets. These are succeeded by the deeper and more varied unity of the cooling planet with an atmosphere and oceans. Life is a wonderful step in the same direction. The plant is much more finely and sensitively unified and at the same time more differentiated, than the mineral or chemical elements,

carbon, potash and the like, of which it is composed. With the emergence of animal life a great advance is made. There is a novel integrating factor or organ of unification, a nervous system. With nerve cells, feeling, and therefore pleasure, becomes possible. The nervous system itself passes through the universal process of integration through differentiation. The nerve cells in the simplest animals are diffused and unorganized. Their presence becomes manifest first in movement as a result of sensation, the simple nervous chain of afferent, central, and efferent neurones being established, and the reflex actions of Instinct coming into play.

Upon the manifold and often beautiful unifications of the realm of instinctive life, the Brain supervenes, the last and, to our way of speaking, highest organ of nature's quest for a unity within which there shall be infinite diversity. The brain has passed through the universal process, from an undifferentiated, chiefly olfactory organ up to the delicately organized instrument of Mind ; and its advent means 'unity of command' over most of the nervous forces and the powers of the body they affect. The mind of man carries on the undeviating tendency of nature, in a Quest for Unity now become conscious, and expressing itself in all the activities of his theoretical and practical life. From the simplest perception to the scientific theory of Einstein, from the humblest concept, such as 'greenness' or 'sunshine', to the most complete system of Philosophy, from the vaguest taboo to the Categorical Imperative, and from the simplest prayer to the most deeply realized communion with God, man is in search of, and progressively attaining mental, moral, and spiritual unifications within his own soul. It is our Christian philosophy to regard the highest possible unification within a man, the most finely and richly woven texture of his personality, as capable of being secured by the kingdom of Heaven within him, that is,

the ordering and harmonizing of all the elements of his inner life by the Christ-ideal or the spirit of Christ. This, which is just as really and scientifically part of the evolutionary process, as the unconscious unifications of form and colour in the flower by the working together of sun and air and living cell, is the method by which nature achieves a high moral and spiritual integration of the soul of a man.

As, however, even for very simple integrations of his life such as speech, for example, or the family, man needs his fellow, there is developed in the world-process a series of social unifications, in an ascending scale of size and complexity, namely, mother and child, family, tribe, nation, commonwealth, with—projected into the future and variously conceived as an ideal, a utopian dream, or as the logical expansion of these earlier integrations—a world-community, humanity organized as a whole. For these social unifications the Christian system of thought also provides an ideal in the kingdom of heaven upon earth, a society of persons in which there may be, it is believed, the richest, most differentiated individuality and freedom for the members of that community, within a close integration of common faith, shared ideals and realized brotherhood. Finally, there is a unification towards which philosophy and science inevitably move, and which religion also naturally attempts, a unification of the whole of existence. For religion it is maintained that the supreme unity is best conceived as Personal. The word is inadequate, as any word, or indeed any attempted unification, is. Vast antinomies remain unresolved by it. But human personality, the culmination of the evolutionary process in nature, is the richest, most varied, and yet most sensitively integrated unity to be found in the natural world. Using it, therefore, as the best category at our disposal, we conceive of the whole of existence as falling into an order which suggests an infinite Mind, acting

upon the principles of wisdom and love. We are not concerned here to defend this spiritual monism, as it has been called, as against a materialistic or a pantheistic monism ; but we should maintain that there is, according to history and experience, in faith in God as the unification of existence, great power for the unification of the individual soul ; and that there is great power for the creation of a nobly unified society, in this faith in the Divine wisdom and love at the heart of things.

This is the ' everlasting yea ' at which Carlyle's hero in *Sartor Resartus* arrived : and we quote an expression of it as making the transition to the second term of our discussion, namely, happiness.

' How thou fermentest and elaboratest, in thy great fermenting-vat and laboratory of an Atmosphere, of a World, O Nature !—Or what is Nature ? Ha ! why do I not name thee God ? Art thou not the " Living Garment of God " ? O Heavens, is it, in very deed, He, then, that ever speaks through thee ; that lives and loves in thee, that lives and loves in me ? Fore-shadows, call them rather fore-splendours, of that Truth, and Beginning of Truths, fell mysteriously over my soul. Sweeter than Dayspring to the Shipwrecked in Nova Zembla ; ah, like the mother's voice to her little child that strays bewildered, weeping, in unknown tumults ; like soft streamings of celestial music to my too-exasperated heart, came that Evangel. The Universe is not dead and demoniacal, a charnel-house with spectres ; but godlike and my Father's.' ¹

It is impossible to miss the note of happiness, of joy, of ecstasy even, in this rhapsody. It is, in fact, a happiness which accompanies a unification, that union of the soul, indeed, with God, as the meaning of the whole of things, which brings unification, harmony, peace to the soul itself. It is one of the highest forms of the association we are investigating, that of unification with happiness, the gladness of faith, the joy of religion, the ecstasy of mysticism. We may now trace this relation in the process of evolution.

¹ *Sartor Resartus* (Chapman and Hall), p. 130.

In the early and lower stages of development it is better to speak of Pleasure, in the sense of pleasurable feeling, and to reserve the term Happiness for the higher human forms. In looking back, then, upon the evolution of animal life, which, in virtue of its endowment of nerves, is first capable of pleasurable feeling, we perceive the interesting fact that nature attaches a pleasure to every unification which has survival value. An obvious example is the assimilation of food, which is certainly necessary for survival, and which is accompanied by not merely the satisfaction of an appetite, but the pleasure of taste and the sense of well-being. The most striking instance, naturally, is Sex, where the very nerve of biological evolution itself, the impulse towards new life-integrations, is reinforced by the intensest kind of pleasure. Unifications in the Mind, upon which human survival comes mainly to depend, have also their attendant pleasure. The formation of totalities or wholes in thought, in reasoning and imagination, carries with it this satisfaction.

In treating of this connexion more in detail, we may do so conveniently under four heads :

- I. The Animal Body.
- II. The Mind.
- III. The Moral Life.
- IV. The Religious Life.

I. *The Animal Body.*

Nature has two great aims in the realm of life. The first is the maintenance and development of the existing organism. This is what is commonly called the instinct of self-preservation ; but it is really, as we have seen earlier, a group of self-preservative instincts and tendencies, with intelligent adaptations added in the higher creatures. The second aim is the reproduction of the organism, the creation of a new organism and provision for its maintenance. This is embodied in the

other-preservative tendencies, instincts and intelligent adaptations.

1. The pleasures connected with Self-preservation and its various unifications.

(a) There is the group of pleasures associated with all that sustains and develops the animal body. Those of food, of expansion of the lungs with fresh air, of warmth, of relaxation, of exercise of the muscles, are examples of bodily integrations accompanied by pleasurable feeling. The pleasure of muscular activity may be taken as a good instance of a bodily unification with its accompanying feeling, which passes through many modifications in the process of evolution, but retains always something of its original character. It throws light upon the Psychology of Play; for this pleasure of unification appears in the play of young animals, which has survival value both because it develops the body and because it is the overture which summarizes the future grand opera of life. It is also the attraction, in part, of athletic games and sport. Many of these, it may be added, are examples of 'reversion' to the hunting, open-air savage. In this, the return to the primitive, there is a subtle pleasure already in some measure analysed. The semi-ritual ball-games in some towns on the Scottish borders and elsewhere, which may indicate the origin of the various ball-games of modern sport, and may account for the disproportionate passion associated with them, are held in Spring, and are probably survivals of ancient magical contests designed to aid the ever-renewed struggle of Spring or Summer with Winter, or of life with death in nature.

This pleasure of muscular exertion, which is the main point, overcoming resistance and bending things to the will, is found in healthy, creative manual labour: it may be degraded into a savage delight in exerting physical power over and even torturing others: it may become wholly mental and be translated into Napoleonic

ambition and love of conquest; and it may be sublimated into bearing one another's burdens. There is a fairly clear lineage, allowing for enhancements and refinements of it from other sources on the way, between this ancestral bodily unification, with its companion pleasure of tingling nerve cells, and the higher integrations of creative work and altruistic endeavour.

(*b*) Another example under the head of Self-preservation is the pleasure of Escape. Any one who has been in serious danger knows the thrilling delight of having escaped. Now, peril was as constant to primitive man as his shadow. For countless ages his main business in life, apart from food and sex, was eluding his enemies. He must thus have known more frequently than we can imagine the thrill of being in danger and then being safe. These would naturally become associated in his mind, the peril and the pleasure, the risk and the delight of escape. This would be an advantage biologically: it would have a certain survival value; for in order that man should continue to evolve in the line of humanity, it was necessary that he should take risks, and equally necessary that he should escape. Thus the mere pleasure of escaping would induce man sometimes to accept the risk—though such mental integrations as Curiosity, with its attendant pleasure, to which we refer presently, would generally play their part in the affair. This is the pleasure of all risk in modern times. It is the peculiar fascination of gambling—as contrasted with other forms of the pursuit of gain—by taking the risk of loss to recover the ancient pleasure of escape.

Other examples can be found of this association of pleasure with escape or relief, the deliverance being, it need hardly be said, a form of integration, the preservation of the threatened unity of the self. The enjoyment of tragedy on the stage is partly of this nature. On the one hand, there is the relief of knowing subcon-

sciously that the sorrows are all unreal ; on the other hand, there is the more poignant element of escape, in that we see the ' terror ' and the ' pity ', and feel them too, but at the same time are safe from them, enjoying, as from some height or cave of safety, the delight of escape. It would be absurd to ignore other and loftier elements of both unification and pleasure in the enjoyment of drama—intellectual and emotional elements of sympathy, resignation or moral relief, which bring with them their ' purification ' ; but the pleasure of escape is also there. The sensation of *Grand Guignol*, for instance, is very much a renewal of the primitive ancestral thrill of viewing the horror while knowing oneself comfortably out of it. This probably throws some light on the psychology of spectators at gladiatorial shows and *autos-da-fé*.

2. The Pleasure connected with other-preservation and the continuance of the race.

(a) The integration of Sex, supremely important for the existence of the species, has attached to it the keenest of pleasures. There is no better example of the survival value of this association. As a unification, the sex motive differentiates into many subordinate integrations, such as display, song, nest-building, and home-making. The satisfaction joined to these appears to brim over at times into a mental and even artistic pleasure. The thrush and other birds sing after their mating is completed ; and starlings, with their imitations of jackdaw and corn-crake, seem to derive an almost humorous satisfaction from the performance.

(b) The unification of the family, to which is entrusted nature's immense interest in the future of the race, has its own endowment of pleasure. The pleasure of motherhood and of parenthood is connected inseparably with that parental care which is so necessary to survival in view of the long and helpless human infancy. The pleasure associated with the family

relation, tends from the beginning to be altruistic, being, for example, satisfaction in the safety and well-being of the offspring, pursued often at the cost of considerable self-sacrifice.

(c) The unification of the Tribe involves several elements of pleasure, which strengthen the motives of early social morality. There is the sense of safety and power in being part of a mass. An important feature is the exhilaration of taking part in massed actions, such as tribal dances and other ritual celebrations, and in general the expansive feeling of doing things on a large scale, when each individual feels himself part of one great personality constituted by the tribe. The counterpart of fear of being out of conformity with the customs of the group, and terror of the imaginatively heightened penalties, is the deep satisfaction of being at one with the tribe and at peace with the tribal law. The tribal unification or the integration of custom, has, as already observed, both advantages and disadvantages for human progress. On the one hand, it lays down foundations for a social morality, and teaches the individual to subordinate the interests of himself and the family group to the wider interests of the larger social unity. The pleasure of unification to which we have just referred, is a powerful sanction of this social ethic. The disadvantage, on the other hand, of the tribal unification is, as we have seen, that it secures an adaptation to the environment which is an equilibrium of safety and stagnation. This equilibrium can be, and in most cases of savage tribes is, maintained through indefinite ages, when also the custom of the tribe receives an almost instinctive obedience. To this the pleasurable sense of unity with the whole, the satisfaction of conformity, and the peace and relaxation of effort in submission to authority, add so much strength that many tribes remain in a social condition resembling that of instinctive groups, like fighting, hunting, and

slave-keeping ants. Deliverance from this stagnation comes by those impacts and movements which break up the tribe and the integration of custom, and create the new unifications of nationhood and civilization. The new pleasures associated with these integrations are very much of a mental character.

II. *The Mind.*

In order to have a true idea of the connexion of Unification with pleasure in the mind, it is necessary to recall that the mind itself, like the brain its organ, passes through the process of integration by differentiation. Savage thought is simple, incoherent, diffused: the civilized mind has highly differentiated powers and interests such as knowledge, reason, imagination and appreciation of art. Yet the highest type of mind is the most integrated, most a unity. The peculiar quality of genius is this power of unification, the specific unifying activity of mind in it being imagination. Shakespeare's poetic imagination integrates—not mechanically but as by a transfused fire or like the life-process which makes flowers out of dust and air—his observation of nature and his knowledge of men, his sense of music and rhythm, and all the other differentiations of his many-sided mind, into the sublime unification of *King Lear* or *The Tempest*. The ordinary cultured mind arranges in a more pedestrian way the material of experience into ordered wholes. A mind, further, possessed by an ideal or by a great faith touched with emotion, may find all its acquisitions, powers, and interests unified, and directed into the pursuit of that ideal, or devoted to the service of that faith. An ideal of goodness, a social enthusiasm, a faith like the Christian faith, loyalty to a personality such as that which Jesus Christ commands, may integrate even the ordinary mind, and make a unification of its life which is both noble *and* happy.

For here also nature pursues her ancient policy : to

each true unification in mind, as in the realm of the body, she attaches a pleasure, or, as it becomes in human life, a happiness. After our arboreal ancestor left the trees, nature depended almost wholly upon mind for human survival. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that to all mental unifications which have survival value, there is added an element of pleasurable feeling. A good example is Curiosity. If the animal is to live in its dangerous world, it must be curious as to the new and unfamiliar when it appears. Thus there is a drop of nectar in the heart of every flower of knowledge and discovery. And all the realms into which the curious and inquiring mind travels, provided it is towards life and not towards death, are 'realms of gold', because every newly discovered country of the earth or of the heavens, or simply of the mind itself, is suffused with this warm radiance. Every totality unified out of new experience blended with old, every rich whole of philosophic idea, of scientific law, of poetic or artistic imagination, or even of mystical vision, newly attained, brings with it, nobly refined, this primeval joy.

It appears to be the case in mental unifications that the pleasure is often in proportion to the magnitude of the integration. The ecstasy of Archimedes when he discovered his great law of hydrostatics, and Kepler's reverent joy when, in reading the laws of the stars, he exclaimed: 'O God, I am thinking Thy thoughts after Thee,' suggest this conclusion. The poet Keats, in comparing his own delight in the grandeur of Chapman's *Homer*, to the thrill of the astronomer 'when a new planet swims into his ken', and to the charmed wonder of Cortez having as it were to make room in his mind for the Pacific Ocean, brings together three illustrations of the same psychological fact, namely, the delight attending large mental unifications. It is as though the mind, expanding to take in, to grasp entire a vast new totality in thought, felt the same kind of exhilaration

as the lungs feel in expanding to deep draughts of mountain air. Have we here a hint as to a possible psychological basis for these facts and for the connexion of pleasure with unification? One ventures to state it simply, perhaps crudely.

The cells of the brain are connected by synapses, locking processes, with each other. This gives a physical connexion for unified thought and common feeling alike. A new integration of fresh phenomena with elements already in experience, in the form of, say, a scientific discovery, an invention, or a great project, means that the cells which 'store' the elements belonging to the past, are awake and thrilling with the reproduction of them in memory, while other cells are excited by the new elements. The co-ordinating mind, using the developed co-ordinating power of the brain, in making the unification, sends through all these cells alike a nervous discharge, which is at once an awareness or cognition of the mental content in them, and a reinforcement of each by the energy of all the others as *in* the unification. Now, pleasure in all its forms is an excitation or excited condition of the nerve cells. Here is, then, an area of the brain in which all the cells are thrilling together, each pouring out its own message, but each electrified or stimulated by the message of the achieved whole in which the message has new meaning. This seems to give the physiological conditions of mental pleasure. The cognitive side of the same phenomenon of thrilling nerve cells in the one interconnected brain area, is knowing, discovery, the vision of a great whole: the feeling side of it is pleasure.

III. *The Moral Life.*

In the higher animals there are not wanting the rudiments of courage, loyalty, and unselfish love. These are present in the most primitive men; and the unification of the inward life which the deed of courage,

loyalty or unselfishness involved, would bring with it its own satisfaction. Within the integration of the tribe or of custom, these elements of 'natural' morality are never absent, though the sophistications of savage reasoning and the logical elaborations of custom often produce a harshness and refinement of cruelty, which are not found within the 'natural' morality of simpler peoples or even within the relations of the more intelligent animals. The *mores* or customs of the tribe are its morality; and the great achievement of this stage of human development is the sense of social obligation. Morality may thus become concern for the safety of the whole, for the interests of others. We noted in the last section the satisfaction and pleasure which come from the sense of unification with the custom of the tribe. True morality, however, necessitates a degree of individuality. This, as already seen, emerges in peoples which have broken from the tribal system and moved out, under strong individuals as leaders, towards the institutions and spirit of national life. Here grow up moral standards which become the conscience of the individual, and once again the law we are tracing operates—the man finds happiness in the harmony of his life with these moral standards, and in the unification of his motives and conduct with that conscience.

We may reach the same point along another line. Nature, though 'careful of the type', is not careless of the individual. We saw that her first aim is the maintenance and development of the existing organism. All the energies of a healthy plant move towards its perfect form with unconscious concentration, and, so to speak, unanimity. The animal pursues, with a certain awareness of them, the unifications of its bodily and mental life, and finds happiness in the most complete and varied integration which is its individual perfection. In man, nature is pursuing a higher integration still,

one which includes in his perfection as an organism, not only his animal and mental, but his moral and spiritual life. In him the pursuit of the highest unification of his life is increasingly self-conscious: he can visualize it and visualize himself, and thus it becomes his ideal. In obedience to that ideal and unification with it, he attains happiness and peace. It is evident enough where this theory parts company with Hedonism and Utilitarianism. The aim of nature through the whole biological series is not pleasure or happiness but unification, namely, the highest and most differentiated integration of life; but all through, pleasure, in the lower ranks of the series, happiness, in the human sphere of conscience and duty, is the prize of unification. The kingdom in the soul is a kingdom of Heaven.

IV. *The Religious Life.*

We have seen that the moral unification becomes man's ideal consciously pursued. But the highest and most differentiated integration of human life is personality. Now, in the Christian system of thought the personality of Christ is the ideal of the soul. As the plant lives by seeking and moving up to its full blossoming, though unconsciously, so the soul lives by 'admiration, love and hope' of the ideal. Love, in particular, the most spiritual and yet the strongest power of unification between personalities, unites the spirit of man seeking its ideal, with the Spirit of Christ, which is the richest expression known to us of that ideal; and the unification brings with it its natural and very deep happiness. The reign of the ideal, loved as a personality, is the kingdom of Heaven in the soul.

Union with God, the supreme religious state of the soul, the mystical unification, however it is conceived, being the entrance into man's mind and heart, in greater or less degree, of the infinitely great Unity, should naturally bring with it that keen pleasure or

happiness of which we spoke earlier, as arising from the expansion of thought and feeling in order to take in something very great. This, we believe, accounts for the pleasurable feeling which some of the mystics have found in their union with God when He was conceived of in a highly abstract fashion, under such terms as Pure Being, Unapproachable Light, Divine Darkness, and the like. In these experiences, however, there is probably little more than the momentary thrill of the rushing into the mind of pure vastness, like a brilliant, blank wall of sheet-lightning. Yet these are sometimes regarded as the typical mystics. Mrs. Herman corrects this error by pointing out that the visions of the most inspired mystics have an intellectual warp and woof, and that their idea of God has the concreteness and richness of personality. As she truly says, 'At the heart of the mystical literature there throbs, as its vital impulse, a sense of God immanent in the world and in the soul, not merely as Cosmic Force, but as personal Love; not only as animating principle but chiefly as redeeming power. However passages might be multiplied that seem to prove the contrary, it remains that the God of the Christian mystic, at any rate, is and has always been a Person whom he delights to describe positively and in terms of his own highest and best, and whom, more often than not, he completely identifies with the Saviour Christ to whom his passionate and personal love is given.'¹

The process of integration through differentiation, which is the method of the creative evolution of the universe, takes conscious form in man. It expresses itself in man's essential quest, which is directed towards the unification of his life. In this quest for unity within himself, he is seeking always a deeper and more sensitive integration, together with the utmost possible

¹ *The Meaning and Value of Mysticism*, E. Herman, (James Clarke & Co.), p. 299.

variety or differentiation. The imperfection of the instruments with which he works at the earlier stages of his human evolution—in particular, his imperfectly co-ordinated brain and mind—accounts for the imperfection of his earlier attempted unifications, and the manifold forms of his theories and customs. The integration of man's inner life involves certain integrations of his environment, of his world, including his fellows and his societies, unifications of himself with his world and of his world with himself. The highest forms of unification appear to be those in which the utmost variety and richness of the personal life are accompanied by the closest unity or harmony with the ultimate Reality, which is moral and spiritual, and, in some sense, personal. The quest is unending; but with each successive, and ever richer, more differentiated unification, there is an attendant happiness or peace.

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